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THE
HISTORY OF THE
ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE
HUSSARS YEOMANRY
1898-1922



THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT
HON. COLONEL ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE HUSSARS

**THE
HISTORY OF THE
ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE
HUSSARS YEOMANRY**

1898-1922

**THE GREAT CAVALRY CAMPAIGN
IN PALESTINE**

**BY
FRANK FOX**

**LATE OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY AND OF
THE GENERAL STAFF; AUTHOR OF "G.H.Q., MON-
TREUIL-SUR-MER," "THE BRITISH ARMY AT
WAR," "THE BATTLE OF THE RIDGES,"
"RAMPARTS OF EMPIRE,"
ETC., ETC.**

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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To
HENRY
NINTH DUKE OF BEAUFORT
HONORARY COLONEL OF THE
ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE
HUSSARS YEOMANRY

A FOREWORD

By LIEUT.-COL. A. J. PALMER, D.S.O.

THE collection of data was started in 1914 necessary to continue the history of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars from 1897, up to which date a very excellent and instructive record had been published by a late Adjutant, now Col. W. H. Wyndham-Quin, C.B., D.S.O.

With the event of the war the work had to be put on one side, and on the return home five years later the publication of a record which was to embody the war period presented a far greater problem. Apparently no officer was in a position to give sufficient time to write a history, so assistance had to be found elsewhere, and I am much indebted to Mr. Frank Fox, the author of *G.H.Q.* and many other works, who has compiled and edited this book. It cannot have been an easy task, as he was not with the regiment during the campaign and has had to rely on notes and diaries supplied by various officers.

The object aimed at has been to chronicle the movements and work of the R.G.H. in conjunction with the general scheme of the higher authority conducting the campaign. During the period the regiment was embodied so many incidents occurred that it has been impossible to detail in this work much beyond what actually took place daily in conjunction with other troops, and therefore it may be regarded as a general account of the work performed by the R.G.H. during the Great War, and as a continuation of the R.G.H. records referred to above.

In conclusion, I should like to acknowledge with grateful thanks the assistance and notes supplied by Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., Major A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, M.C., Capt. E. T. Cripps, M.C., and the diary of the late Lieut. R. G. Anderson, kindly lent me by his parents.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN undertaking to continue the history of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Regiment from 1897, when the admirably clear record of Col. W. H. Wyndham-Quin, C.B., D.S.O., ceased, until 1922, when the regiment as a cavalry regiment came to an end (though continuing its corporate existence as an Armoured Car Company), the author was faced by the preliminary difficulty of dealing with the years up to 1914. To ignore them was impossible, for a regiment cherishes dearly the ideal of continuity; and its members wish to follow its career year by year in peace and in war. Yet it was difficult to place the records of peace years in front of the history of the magnificent war services of the regiment from 1914 to 1918. Still, it had to be done. Perhaps the general reader, as well as the members of the regiment, will find these early chapters not altogether without interest if they remember that it was because a few men of the nation were willing during the tedium of peace years to prepare for war as Territorials or Volunteers that our position was not entirely desperate in 1914.

In the Palestine campaign—the most notable cavalry campaign of modern history—the R.G.H. were engaged continuously from the first tentative ventures beyond the banks of the canal to the last great advance which swept the Turkish Empire out of the war and gave to the British arms that full measure of success which had been denied to Napoleon and to the armies of the Crusades. Their share in that achievement makes their fame secure for ever, and it will be the chief task of this volume to tell of it.

The author had not the honour of serving with the Royal Gloucestershire Yeomanry; it was his fate to see the Great War through on the French Front; and the fact makes it impossible that this book should be really

worthy of its subject. But he knows the terrain of the campaign and has followed the trail of the victorious army after the Armistice ; and Col. A. J. Palmer and other officers of the regiment have given most generous assistance. Further, he has not hesitated to draw upon the stirring narratives dealing with parts of the campaign by Lieut.-Col. the Hon. R. M. Preston, D.S.O. (*The Desert Mounted Corps*—Constable), by Lieut.-Col. Rex Osborne, D.S.O., M.C. (in the *Cavalry Journal*), by Capt. O. Teichman, D.S.O., M.C. (*The Diary of a Yeomanry M.O.*—T. Fisher Unwin), and of his friend and colleague, Mr. W. T. Massey, C.B.E. (*Allenby's Final Triumph*—Constable). To all these grateful acknowledgment is made.

FRANK FOX.

CHAPTER I

TWO YEARS OF PEACE (1898-1899)

THE closing of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the end of the European system which was established by the Napoleonic wars, though few were so far-seeing as to recognise in the South African War, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the first move in the plan of the German Empire to establish a world hegemony over the ruins of British power. But in the year 1898—at which point the history of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars is resumed—there was hardly a cloud on the world's horizon. The world seemed settled in peace, and there was in England a more than ordinary growth of that optimism which turns a blind eye to the past and confidently predicts a final exemption of man from Nature's inexorable laws of struggle for survival.

Those who could foresee the dangerous crisis to which the Empire was moving were profoundly uneasy at the difficulty in preserving a martial spirit and an enthusiasm for training in a period of profound peace, which seemed to give no hint that the time given up to war practice would ever be of any real use to the nation. "Active Service" seemed a remote improbability, and to the majority of Englishmen it appeared as a fantastic sacrifice of energy to join Yeomanry or Militia. The members of the R.G.H. were among those who responded to the warnings of the prudent, and, looking back, it can be seen how much gratitude the country owes to those who in the "piping times of peace" could foresee that the occasion might again come when the Empire had to be defended. Grave were the difficulties which faced the kingdom when New Armies had to be improvised for

the Great War. Those difficulties would have been aggravated to the point of desperation if it had not been that there was a small nucleus of partially-trained Volunteer forces to come to the help of the Regular Army and to give to the mass of the citizens some lead in preparation.

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A very magnificent appearance the regiment made on parade in these days, and very proud they were of their splendid accoutrements. *Pace* the gibes of the ignorant, it is wholesome and sound that a regiment should take pride in the pomp of chivalry. Whatever we hold to be the original motive of fine uniform for soldiers—whether believing that it had the intention of impressing and overawing an enemy, or that it was founded on the same motive which impelled Leonidas and his Spartans to deck themselves out gloriously for death at Thermopylæ—experience of warfare shows that a fine uniform helps courage, discipline, and humanity in the soldier. A good soldier does not become a bad soldier when circumstances force him to be ragged or to go out to his fighting in sombre uniform, but almost invariably the good soldier, in peace and in war, takes pride in a fine uniform as a symbol that he is devoted to the highest service of his country and that his devotion will not stop short at the sacrifice of his life.

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In 1898 there was the usual bad weather luck when the regiment, under command of Col. the Marquis of Worcester, assembled at Cheltenham for permanent duty from May 12 to May 28. The extremely wet and cold weather interfered with the work considerably, as well as with the comfort of the men. The strength on marching in, all ranks, was 363.

On May 19 the regiment was inspected by Major-Gen. R. Talbot, C.B., G.O.C. Cavalry, Aldershot.

The M.M. carbine was used by the regiment for the first time this year and the regimental team took third place at Bisley in the shoot for the Inter-Yeomanry Challenge Cup.

On July 1 Regtl. Sergt.-Major H. Hayward terminated his engagement after fifteen years' service. He was very popular in the regiment, and upon leaving was presented with a gold watch. S.S.M. E. Allitt succeeded him as Regimental Sergeant-Major.

On December 2, when the Sirdar of Egypt (Lord Kitchener) visited Cardiff to receive the freedom of the city, an escort was furnished by the Monmouth Squadron under 2nd Lieut. F. Wombwell.

The new squadron system was brought into force in December, 1898, as follows :

The Gloucester and Cheltenham Troops became " A " Squadron, with headquarters at Gloucester.

The Badminton and Berkeley Troops became " B " Squadron, with headquarters at Badminton.

The Monmouth Troops became " C " Squadron, with headquarters at Newport.

The Doddington and Bristol Troops became " D " Squadron, with headquarters at Bristol.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1898 :

Capt. and Hon. Major C. H. Palairt resigned his commission, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (December 17).

Capt. T. H. Cardwell resigned his commission with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (April 16).

Lieut. D. E. Taylor resigned his commission (April 16).

C. G. M. Adam, late Lieutenant 14th Hussars, to be Captain (June 13).

.

The year 1899 opened with a mark of honour for the regiment when in February its officer commanding, Col.

the Marquis of Worcester, was appointed A.D.C. to H.M. Queen Victoria, who conferred the rank of Colonel upon him for his services in the yeomanry cavalry.

The customary mounted drills for permanent duty were held by the various troops as follows :

On April 27 the Gloucester Troop paraded under Major H. H. Calvert, and the Cheltenham Troop under Major J. E. C. Mathews, and the Berkeley Troop under Capt. W. H. Playne, and the Bristol Troop under Major R. P. Sandeman.

The death of the Duke of Beaufort, which took place on April 30, was a cause of sincere regret to all ranks of the regiment with which he had been connected for a very long period. After his resignation early in 1874 as Commanding Officer and Colonel he had continued to take a keen interest in the regiment's career. The Duke's funeral at Badminton on May 5 was attended by the Badminton and Doddington Troops (with which he had been so closely associated) as representatives of the regiment, under Capt. D. B. Lindsay and Lieut. W. E. Emmott. The S.Q.M.S.'s of the other troops were also present, but the regiment being then at permanent duty, the Commanding Officer regretted that it was impossible to give leave to other members of the regiment to attend the funeral.

On May 4 the regiment assembled at Cheltenham for permanent duty and were dismissed on the 13th. This was the last time that training was carried out under the billeting system. On May 6, and again at the combined church parade on May 7, the regiment was inspected by Lieut.-Gen. Sir F. Walker, K.C.B.

On May 12 Major-Gen. J. D. P. French, G.O.C. 1st Cavalry Brigade (who was later Commander-in-Chief, B.E.F., France, and is now Field-Marshal Earl French of Ypres) inspected the regiment. He expressed himself as very greatly pleased with the result of his inspection, and declared his intention of making a good report to the War Office.

The enrolled strength for 1899 was 377 of all ranks.

On November 15, 1899, Her Majesty Queen Victoria, accompanied by Princess Beatrice and Princess Christian, visited Bristol to open the Jubilee Convalescent Home, for which over £100,000 had been subscribed, and the regiment paraded at noon in the Cattle Market in review order under Col. F. Henry.

The Duke of Beaufort, A.D.C., acting as Brigadier of the three yeomanry regiments present, placed himself at the head of the procession, attended by Major C. Bishop, who was Brigade Major for the day. The fine appearance of the regiment on this parade was greatly admired.

The regiment was formed into two squadrons, "A" and "B" Squadrons forming the 1st and "C" and "D" Squadrons the 2nd Squadron, under the command respectively of Majors H. H. Calvert and R. P. Sandeman. The following officers were also on parade: Major J. E. C. Mathews, Major G. J. G. C. Codrington, Capt. C. Stacey, Capt. W. H. Playne, Capt. D. B. Lindsay, Capt. C. G. M. Adam, Lieut. V. W. Yorke, Lieut. J. A. W. Talbot, 2nd Lieut. G. J. Sandys, 2nd Lieut. W. R. Emmott, 2nd Lieut. F. Wombwell, 2nd Lieut. A. J. Palmer.

After this parade the following appeared in District Orders:

ROYAL VISIT TO BRISTOL

The G.O.C. has much pleasure in acceding to the request of the Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of Bristol to convey to the officers, N.C.O.'s and men both of the Regular and Auxiliary forces present during the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to Bristol on November 15 the Lord Mayor's and the Royal Reception Committee's thanks for the great assistance of the troops towards making the day's ceremonies such a success.

The C.O., in publishing the above order, has much pleasure in congratulating the regiment on their turn-out and appearance, and on the satisfactory manner in which all ranks carried out their duties on November 15, which left nothing to be desired.

There was a second parade that month before royalty. On November 16 a royal escort was furnished by "A"

Squadron for H.R.H. Princess Beatrice when she visited Cheltenham to unveil a bust of H.M. Queen Victoria at the ladies' college.

That parade marked the end of an epoch. The next month the South African War was to bring rude reminder to the British Empire that there were jealous observers of her greatness, and that no degree of disinterestedness and goodwill in the carrying out of the responsibilities which had fallen to her would abate the animosity of rivals.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1899 :

2nd Lieuts. J. A. W. Talbot and W. R. Emmott were attached to the 17th Lancers at Ballincollig from April 1 to 29 and were awarded certificates for the rank of Capt.

Lieuts. T. Stacey and F. M. Freake resigned their commissions (February 4).

E. T. Hill, late Capt. 19th Hussars, to be Capt. (super-numerary) (February 15).

A. J. Palmer and L. A. Huth to be 2nd Lieuts. (August 2).

Capt. G. J. G. C. Codrington granted the hon. rank of Major (August 9).

2nd Lieut. J. A. W. Talbot to be Lieut. (August 9).

CHAPTER II

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR (1900-1902) ¹

THE South African War, it may be seen in the light of later events, would never have broken out if it had not been for the restless ambition and the hatred of England of the then German Kaiser. President Kruger in Pretoria was but the tool of the Kaiser in Potsdam. The war in South Africa was designed by the German war party to be the first step in the downfall of the British Empire. Direct intervention in the issue, which was to have been the next step, the Germans found at the last moment that they had not the necessary courage to attempt, and efforts to secure a joint intervention by the European Powers failed. The British Navy—of overwhelming relative strength at that time—stood in the way, and Germany had to wait for her challenge to Great Britain until she felt she could in some measure hold her own at sea.

That we should have composed peaceably our differences with the Boer colonists in South Africa if there had not been an incessant incitement of them to war, and a promise of real support to them by the German Empire, may be reasonably taken for granted. True, the Boer came of as sturdy and as strong-willed, stubborn stock as our own. His ancestors had once disputed with us the command of the sea, and the overseas Empire of Holland had been greater for a time than that of England. The Boer, having his own race tradition, naturally was reluctant to turn with loyalty to Britain as a mother country; but the British Imperial system is so flexible

¹It will be convenient to give up this chapter to the South African War, departing a little from chronological order to do so, and to take up the narrative of the regiment at home in the next chapter.

and so much separated from any thought of tyranny or of interference in dealing with Dependencies, Colonies, and Dominions, that the South African Boers might well have found a peaceable solution of all their controversies with the South African British and with the Home Government, if it had not been for the evil machinations of the German Power seeking destruction of the prestige and authority of Great Britain as a step to a German overlordship of Europe and of the world.

The Boers went into the war confident that the Germans would come to their help. The Germans not only abandoned them when they saw their cause was hopeless, but treated them with contumely and insult—a characteristic instance of the psychological blundering which gave the Germans in the Great War some of their most sturdy foes in South African Boers who had fought against England in 1900–2. In a Gloucestershire Yeomanry officer's diary of the South African War there is included a letter from a surrendered Boer burgher, written to his brother from the Bloemfontein Concentration Camp in August, 1901, in which (as in so many documents of the war) there is shown the Boer hope of German intervention and the Boer bitterness at German treachery:

How we long for the settlement you cannot imagine, nor can you imagine with what disgust and impatience we regard every effort on the part of the Pro-Boers (in England), as they are called, to divert the natural and inevitable course of things. You will not be surprised at hearing this from a one-time Dutch Republican when you take into consideration that all of us who have surrendered are fully aware of the fact that we were the aggressors, and that our statesmen are to blame for our present predicament. A large number of Boers will never come to view the matter in this light. That, of course, is not the result of thought and reflection, but utter and total ignorance. At the beginning of hostilities the one word on everyone's lips was "intervention." The more fanatic class looked forward to Divine intervention. The more advanced and practical were satisfied with German intervention. But this, like everything else of German origin

that I have ever seen, had nothing stable about it. Now, as in the beginning, the one great hope is still intervention, and as long as the Pro-Boers remain ungagged and out of strait-jackets so long will the Boers continue to struggle.

Though the war began in October, 1899, it was not until December of that year that the call came for yeomanry for service in South Africa. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were among the first to respond. A sufficient number of officers and men to form half a company was at once forthcoming from members already serving. On December 30th 70 members were medically examined at Gloucester Barracks for fitness for active service, and of these 5 were rejected. Ultimately the old members of the regiment supplied 56 of the 110 troopers required, the balance of the number being especially enlisted.

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On January 3, 1900, men volunteering for service in South Africa were medically examined, and tested in riding and shooting, to make up the company to 121. Those who successfully passed all tests were specially enlisted into the regiment, and were stationed, together with the permanent staff, at Horfield Barracks, Bristol. Here the training before departure for active service was completed, under atrocious weather conditions.

A County Committee, under the Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Ducie, was formed to equip the company. They were armed with Lee-Metford rifles and equipped as mounted infantry in khaki, with slouch hats.

On February 28 the squadron, 125 strong, left Horfield Camp at 2.30 a.m. for Liverpool, to embark in the transport *Cymric* for the Front. They formed the 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion, which was made up of the 1st and 2nd Wilts and the 4th Glamorgan Companies, under the command of Col. R. G. W. Challoner.

The officers of the company were : Capt. W. H. Playne,

Capt. E. T. Hill, Capt. C. G. M. Adam, Capt. A. L. Grahame-Clark, Lieut. the Hon. R. B. Robertson.

The company reached Liverpool at 11 a.m. on February 28, 1900, and embarked on the *Cymric* at Alexandra Dock. Two corporals were left behind sick. The transport left the dock at 5 p.m. the same day, but did not actually sail for Cape Town until March 1st, and so was able to receive the cheering news of the relief of Ladysmith. The *Cymric* touched at Las Palmas on March 6 and left for Cape Town the same day, arriving there on March 19 at 7 a.m. The R.G.H. marched directly to Maitland Camp.

There, on April 3, they were inspected by Lord Erroll. Some days were spent in seeing to equipment. The camp was very overcrowded—there were nine regiments in camp with room only for three—and unhealthy. Dysentery was rife, and there was some enteric fever. Col. R. G. W. Challoner was invalided home, and Major Wyndham-Quin, late Adjutant to the R.G.H., took command. The regiment was very happy to leave the camp on April 18, entraining for Norval's Point. There they detrained and went on by road to Springfontein with Canadian, New Zealand, and Middlesex mounted troops. The regiment marched from there to Bloemfontein, which was reached on May 1, 1900. On the way they were inspected near Bloemfontein by Lord Roberts, who on December 15, 1899, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa. The R.G.H. at Bloemfontein were ordered to join Gen. Rundle's Division, passing on their route the scenes of the disasters at Koorn Spruit and Sanna's Post.

On arrival at Thaba N'Chu the squadron had its "baptism of fire" on May 5 and one trooper was wounded. The yeomanry pursued the Boers in the direction of Ladybrand, which place was evacuated by the enemy and at once seized by the British forces, the R.G.H. being the first to enter the town. They found it a "land of plenty," as it had not been previously occupied by British

troops. Here Capt. Adam was invalided home and Sergt. Barmeston was promoted to command No. 3 troop. Lieut. Robertson was appointed Quartermaster and Sergt. F. H. Clifford (afterwards Major Clifford, killed in action at Rafa January 9, 1917) promoted to command No. 4 troop.

For the next few weeks Ladybrand remained headquarters. Daily expeditions were made into the surrounding country on scouting and reconnoitring work. There was no regular fighting for a little time. The regiment left Ladybrand on June 7, doing patrol and convoy duties, and had some warm skirmishes with the enemy. Conditions of the campaign were trying. The diaries of the officers often recorded "No rations; no coffee," though there was an occasional more cheerful entry, as when on June 13 (a lucky date this time) the R.G.H. came into touch with the Grenadier Guards and discovered that the Guards' cook was a Gloucestershire lad, son of a friend of one of the troop. *That* meant a good dinner.

Towards the latter part of July the greater part of the 1st Yeomanry Battalion, including the R.G.H., assisted in the operations in Brandwater Basin. Capt. Playne's troop were engaged in holding Commando's Nek, where they had been ordered before the surrender of the Boer leader Prinsloo on July 31. The remainder were chiefly engaged in defending a post at Hammonica.

Sickness and short rations had played havoc with Capt. Playne's troop, and out of 28 men only 14 remained, with 4 English horses. The deficiency in horses was made up with native ponies.

In August the 3rd Company joined the 16th Brigade at Kalkroon Krantz and marched to Elandsfontein, where they captured a large number of cattle. For the next month they were operating between Harrismith and Bethlehem, on the Vaal, rounding up the enemy's cattle. On September 17 a troop of the company, with one of the companies of the Wiltshires, located the Boers

at Hartbeeste. They were engaged, and Lieut. Gifford, of the 3rd Company, was severely wounded.

On September 25 the 1st Battalion were again in touch with the Boers. Capt. Playne's troop, escorting the guns, remained in touch with the enemy up till the 28th. The whole of Gen. Rundle's force marched on October 2 to Tefal Kop, and the 1st Battalion were successful in outflanking the enemy.

Vreda was surrounded on October 4, and on October 6 and 7 a march was made to Standerton. On October 8 the company took part in escorting a convoy to Vreda, being attacked by the Boers on the 10th. The R.G.H. Squadron, under command of Capt. E. T. Hill, were in the advance guard. The enemy were beaten off, but the Battalion had several men killed, amongst whom was Sergt. J. Reeve, of Cheltenham. For their work in protecting the convoy Gen. Campbell, who was in command, sent in a very favourable report to Gen. Rundle on the work of the yeomanry who were engaged.

On October 11 the 1st Battalion, after a stiff fight, pursued the enemy for eight miles. On the 14th the Boers were again repulsed. On the 16th the battalion were in touch with the enemy while marching to Vlaktefontein. After driving the Boers off the Lindley Road they took part in stiff fights at Transfontein on the 28th and again near Elands River on the 29th, arriving at Harrismith on October 30.

At the beginning of November, 1900, Major Wyndham-Quin wired home to say that the yeomanry had been by that date under fire 47 times. Early this month the battalion escorted a convoy to Reitz, the 3rd Company forming the advanced guard. They arrived at their destination on the 11th with 90 days' provisions for the garrison, having engaged the enemy in several sharp skirmishes on the way. At Elands River on November 14 they were again under fire. On the following day they arrived at Harrismith.

On December 3 Gen. Rundle began a 60-days' trek

with his whole force, and by the time the operations were over only the strength of a bare company of the four who composed the battalion remained fit for duty.

In February, 1901, the 1st Battalion worked its way to Standerton, the 3rd Company forming the rearguard. On the 13th they were entrained for Harrismith. In the night the Boers blew up the lines, but the yeomanry, with two companies of the Grenadier Guards, drove the Boers off towards the slopes of Majuba Hill. The company now had a short rest, but in May were once more in the fighting line and sustained some losses. In June they mobilised for home, finally returning in July, 1901.

The battalion was on service for 18 months and under fire 65 times.

The 3rd Company sustained the following casualties :

Killed in Action : Ptes. A. G. Harris and P. G. Harris.

Died of Wounds : Sergt. J. Reeve.

Died : Cpl. A. H. James, Ptes. H. Brookes, B. Hadley, E. Hope,
E. C. Neale, A. E. Stockwell, D. Thomas, W. Williams.

On July 26 H.M. the King, on Horse Guards Parade, presented the officers and yeomen of the 1st Contingent with their medals, 41 officers and men of the 3rd Company being present to receive them. S.S.M. W. Gregory (Permanent Staff) was awarded the medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field.

It was notified that all N.C.O.'s of the 3rd Company who wished to rejoin the R.G.H. would be permitted to retain their rank and be held supernumerary until they could be absorbed into the establishment.

Capt. Playne, who remained in South Africa until the end of the war with the new yeomanry (who were not in county detachments), had only five men from Gloucestershire in his new squadron.

CHAPTER III

AT HOME (1900-1901) : REORGANISATION OF THE YEOMANRY

THE sailing of the R.G.H. contingent for South Africa in February, 1900, gave a new interest to the regiment's life at home. There was now for recruits the possibility of active service, which is every true soldier's ambition.

On April 30, 1900, Field-Marshal Earl Roberts visited Bristol to open a hospital there, and an escort was furnished by "D" Squadron, under command of Major R. P. Sandeman.

An event of great interest and importance to the regiment took place on May 14, 1900, when it assembled for permanent training at Ross. For the first time in its history the regiment trained outside the borders of its own county and under canvas, and for 21 days instead of seven. This gave the camp the flavour of the "real thing." Temporary stables of wood and canvas were erected for the horses.

Col. the Duke of Beaufort, A.D.C., commanded the brigade, the regiment being under Col. F. Henry. On May 31 the annual inspection was carried out at a scheme of reconnaissance by Col. C. E. Swaine, C.B.

The regiment also carried out the annual course of musketry during this training. The ration strength at training was 379 of all ranks.

The headquarters of "B" Squadron were this year removed to Badminton from Cheltenham, the Cheltenham men being attached to "A" (or Gloucester) Squadron. "D" Squadron was formed of the Doddington and Bristol Troops. The Badminton detachment formed the headquarters detachment of "B" Squadron.

The Yeomanry Inter-Regimental Cup was won this year by the R.G.H. with 251 points to their credit.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1900 :

C. E. Van Notten-Pole to be 2nd Lieut. (February 14).

Capt. T. H. Cardwell reappointed Captain (May 2).

H. F. H. Hardy, late Lieut., 14th Hussars, to be 2nd Lieut. (May 2).

Surgeon Lieut.-Col. W. Wickham resigned his commission, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (May 9).

Surgeon Capt. H. Bramwell, M.D., from 2nd V.B. Glos. Regiment, to be Surgeon Capt. (May 9).

F. W. L. Tottenham to be 2nd Lieut. (May 9).

Sir C. P. Van Notten-Pole reappointed Lieut. (May 14).

Surgeon Lieut.-Col. A. Grace resigned his commission, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (May 23).

"The Imperial Yeomanry."

Capt. E. T. Hill to be Capt., with temporary rank of Captain in the Army (February 7).

Capt. W. H. Playne and C. G. M. Adam to be Lieuts. with temporary rank of Lieutenants in the Army (February 7).

Capt. and Hon. Major G. J. G. C. Codrington to be Lieut. with temporary rank of Lieutenant in the Army (April 7).

Lieut. C. E. Van Notten-Pole to be 2nd Lieut. in 2nd Dragoon Guards (May 5).

2nd Lieut. G. J. Sandys to be Lieut. with temporary rank of Lieutenant in the Army (March 30).

2nd Lieut. F. Wombwell (recommended by the F.M. C.-in-C. South Africa) to be 2nd Lieut., 16th Lancers (August 8).

Lieut. G. J. Sandys to be 2nd Lieut., 5th Dragoon Guards (August 14).

Capt. and Hon. Major J. F. A. Herbert reappointed Capt. (September 1).

Capt. C. G. M. Adam (supernumerary) to be Capt. on the establishment (November 28).

2nd Lieut. W. R. Emmott to be Lieut. (December 5).

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In January, 1901, the regiment with great regret lost the services of its very popular Adjutant, Major C. Bishop, 9th Lancers, Adjutant of the 3rd Yeomanry Brigade, who retired. He was succeeded by Capt. Lord Charles Cavendish Bentinck, 9th Lancers, whose first task was recruiting for a fresh South African contingent in January and February. The men enrolled trained at Aldershot prior to their departure for the Front.

On the 2nd of February the regiment paraded in review order at the headquarters of their respective squadrons and troops, to attend a memorial service in memory of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria.

In April the Secretary of State for War, Mr. St. John Brodrick (now Lord Midleton), issued his reorganisation scheme. The name of the force was changed from "Yeomanry Cavalry" to "Imperial Yeomanry" and the existing brigade organisation was abolished. The scheme provided for a large increase of the force, each regiment having to be recruited up to an establishment of 593 all ranks, organised in four squadrons, with a machine gun section. The establishment of officers was fixed at 23, including both a regimental Adjutant and a Quartermaster. The force was to be armed with L.E. rifles and bayonets instead of swords and carbines. At the Duke of Beaufort's wish the R.G.H. were allowed to retain their swords for ceremonial parades.

Under the new scheme the annual training was to last 18 days instead of 21 days, and a more liberal scale of allowances was authorised, including a horse allowance of £5 for each mounted officer and yeoman, and payment for attendance at musketry practice not exceeding three days in each year to all ranks at 3s. per diem. Previously only one day's musketry practice had been paid for.

The scheme provided for khaki instead of the blue uniform, and the regiment parted regretfully with its distinctive uniform. Distinctive blue facings were allowed.

The regiment assembled in camp at Badminton for 18 days' training on May 7, when the new drill was put into force. This was more on the lines of mounted rifle training, with special attention to scouting and outpost work.

It was natural that these changes should arouse a certain amount of uneasiness in the ranks of the regiment. It is instinctive for yeomanry to cherish their cavalry character: to look upon themselves as the nursery for the Regular cavalry. The R.G.H.—their traditional uniform gone, their arms changed, their drill changed—feared that they were doomed to pass from out of the category of cavalry and to become "mounted infantry." With many officers and men the uneasiness represented in the main a sense of loss of grade, but with others, who were students of war, there was a conviction that the fashion which set in during the later stages of the Boer War to decry cavalry, to represent it as an out-of-date arm, was mistaken, and these regarded the changes in the yeomanry as injurious to the interests of the defence of an Empire which must in all human probability have always to depend largely on the cavalry arm and the cavalry spirit. Since suitable cavalry recruits were so hard to come by, they felt that it was waste of material to make the young yeoman into an infantryman.

Doubts and disappointments on these points were in some measure allayed when the Commander-in-Chief, F.M. Earl Roberts, accompanied by Col. Sir E. T. Hutton and the Earl of Kerry, inspected the regiment on May 20. A tactical scheme was carried out and a march-past. On the conclusion of the parade Lord Roberts addressed the regiment and said:

He desired to dispel a misapprehension which he understood prevailed that there was a wish on the part of the authorities to turn the old yeomanry of England into mounted infantry. He

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could assure them there was no such desire. They all knew the value of the yeomanry, and at any rate he could speak of what the yeomanry had done in South Africa. They came at a time when mounted troops were most urgently required, and they had done their duty there in quite a splendid manner.

There was the greatest difference between cavalrymen who had occasionally to fight on foot and infantrymen who had sometimes to be put on ponies or horses to enable them to move quickly about the country. The one would always remain cavalry and the other infantry.

Their scheme for the day's movements was given to him as he got out at the railway-station, and he was very glad to see that in those duties the two first movements were distinctly cavalry duties, and those were a screen to conceal the movements of the main body behind and a reconnaissance. Those were duties which no mounted infantry could satisfactorily perform. They were duties which must always be performed by cavalry soldiers—men who understood riding and could get across country and come back quickly with the information they received. These were the two most important duties which the yeomanry would always have to perform.

The third movement was what they would undoubtedly have to do in the future on foot. That, however, did not make them infantrymen. But under present conditions, when they had rifles that could reach 2,000 yards and kill men at that distance, it would be folly for cavalry to expose themselves on horseback and be knocked over, and make themselves useless as combatants.

Yeomanry might be called upon often as infantry to take a position, as they had done that day. There was nothing derogatory in doing that, and that was the only change in the yeomanry drill that was proposed—that, when necessary, they should be ready to attack on foot. To enable them to do that in a satisfactory manner there was one thing essential, and that was that they must be able to shoot as well as the enemy with whom they might be engaged. He noticed that they had all got rifles instead of carbines, and he was very glad indeed to see it. Before he left South Africa all the cavalry—the Lancers, the Dragoon Guards, and Hussars—came to him and begged that their carbines might be taken away and that they might be given the rifle. They said it was no use for them to endeavour to compete with the Boers unless their weapons would carry as far as those of the enemy. He was able to give them rifles, and he had learned since that they had done admirable work.

He advised his hearers to spread themselves out more on

another occasion, as it was found in South Africa that this was necessary. When he first went there he laid down the rule that the files were not to be closer than six paces when advancing to the attack. That was very soon altered to ten and twenty paces. It was absolutely necessary to be widely separated. The Duke of Beaufort was speaking to him about having some weapon other than the rifle. At present they had the sword. What might happen in the future he did not know. They themselves might think it necessary that some other kind of sword, or a sword that went on a rifle, would be necessary. At any rate they had their sword now, and as long as they had not any order against it they might keep it.

He also thought they should be careful not to keep the led horses too far in the rear, and with regard to the necessity of learning to fight on foot, he pointed out how impossible it would have been to carry out a shock charge with so many walls and hedges about. He did not think that there was a single cavalry regiment that he had not served in in some shape or other. He could congratulate them on their turn-out that day.

On May 22, 1901, the official inspection was carried out by Major-Gen. F. W. Hemming, C.B., G.O.C. 1st Cavalry Brigade. The number present at training was 456 of all ranks.

For the first time the L.E. rifle was used at the annual prize shooting. At the County Rifle Meeting, held at Bedminster, both the Officers' Cup and the first prize in the Yeomanry Competition were won by Major R. P. Sandeman.

At Bisley the regiment made a good bid for the Inter-Yeomanry Cup, scoring 240 points.

In July the 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion Imperial Yeomanry returned from active service in the transports *Roslin Castle* and *Manchester Merchant*.

On August 1, 1901, the remainder of the R.G.H. who did not transfer to the Imperial Yeomanry returned in the *Templemore*.

On August 6, 1901, the regiment attended a thanksgiving peace service in Gloucester Cathedral. A public luncheon followed, after which each man was presented with a silver tobacco box.

The strength and posting of officers in December, 1901, was as follows :

C.O., Col. His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, A.D.C.

Adjt., Major Lord C. C. Bentinck, 9th Lancers.

Surgeon Capt. H. Bramwell, F.R.C.S., M.D.

Veterinary Lieut. J. E. L. Still.

" A " Squadron

Major H. H. Calvert, Sqdn. Commander.

Lieuts. V. W. Yorke, J. A. W. Talbot, Sir C. P. Van Notten-Pole, Bt.

2nd Lieut. R. C. Forster.

" B " Squadron

Capt. G. F. Henry, Sqdn. Commander.

Cpts. D. B. Lindsay, L. A. Grahame Clarke, D.S.O., T. H. Cardwell.

2nd Lieut. L. A. Huth.

" C " Squadron

Major C. Stacey, Sqdn. Commander.

Capt. C. G. M. Adam.

Lieut. A. J. Palmer.

2nd Lieut. H. F. H. Hardy.

" D " Squadron

Major R. P. Sandeman, Sqdn. Commander.

Capt. and Hon. Major G. J. G. C. Codrington.

Capt. E. T. Hill.

Lieut. W. R. Emmott.

2nd Lieut. F. W. L. Tottenham.

Machine Gun Section

2nd Lieut. H. F. Clifford.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect this year :

Lieut. A. J. Palmer was attached to the 1st Life Guards at Windsor from the 1st to the 30th of April, and obtained a certificate for the rank of Captain.

Veterinary Lieut. F. B. Jones to be Veterinary Capt. (January 9).

R. C. Forster to be 2nd Lieut. (January 16).

Capt. L. A. Grahame Clarke (Reserve of Officers, late R.A.) to be Supy. Captain, seconded for service with the Imperial Yeomanry (March 9).

The Hon. R. B. F. Robertson, late Capt. 4th Battalion Derbyshire Regiment, to be 2nd Lieut., seconded for service with the Imperial Yeomanry (March 9).

Lieut. H. F. Clifford, 1st Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, 2nd Lieut., seconded for service with the Imperial Yeomanry (March 9).

Capt. and Hon. Major J. F. A. Herbert seconded for service with the Remount Department (September 1, 1900).

Capt. G. F. Henry, late Capt. 9th Lancers, to be Capt. (March 8).

Capt. Lord C. C. Bentinck, 9th Lancers, from the Adjutancy of the late 3rd Yeomanry Brigade to be Adjutant of the regiment (May 22).

Capt. and Hon. Major H. H. Calvert, Capt. and Hon. Major R. P. Sandeman, and Capt. C. Stacey, to be Majors (October 12).

2nd Lieut. A. J. Palmer to be Lieut. (October 12).

Capt. and Hon. Major J. E. C. Mathews resigned his commission, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (November 2).

CHAPTER IV

REORGANISATION—THE QUESTION OF UNIFORM (1902-1905)

ON March 3, 1902, the Prince and Princess of Wales paid a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort at Badminton, when "B" Squadron, under command of Major W. H. Playne, provided a royal guard of honour and escort, meeting the royal visitors at the county border, where they relieved the Royal Wiltshire Imperial Yeomanry, who had formed the escort from the railway-station at Chippenham. When the royal visit terminated on March 5, "B" Squadron again formed the escort from Badminton to Yate station. "D" Squadron formed the guard of honour and escort on the arrival of the royal party at Bristol.

In 1902 a change was made in the regiment's cap badge, the letters "I.Y." (Imperial Yeomanry) being added.

The annual training in camp was held at Badminton from May 6 to May 23. On the 13th the regiment was inspected by Gen. Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.B., and on the 19th by Major-Gen. Lord Chesham, K.C.B. An attack and the defence of a convoy was the scheme carried out. On the 16th exercises in field firing with ball ammunition took place. The Commanding Officer informed the regiment that both Sir Evelyn Wood and Lord Chesham had expressed themselves as much pleased as the result of their inspection. Lord Chesham was particularly struck by the keenness and intelligence shown by all ranks during the various operations. The total strength at training was 450 of all ranks.

The sword competition was this year discontinued, the sword being no longer part of the arms of the regiment.

In September Lce.-Corpls. W. S. Bracher and E. Hunt received certificates as assistant instructors in signalling after an examination held at Bristol.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect this year :

Lieut. A. J. Palmer attended a course of instruction at the Yeomanry School, Aldershot, from March 4 to April 2, and was awarded a field officer's certificate. Capt. and Hon. Major G. J. G. C. Codrington and 2nd Lieut. R. C. Forster attended the school from April 9 to May 7, and were awarded certificates as Lieut. and Capt. respectively.

2nd Lieut. F. W. L. Tottenham resigned his commission (February 26).

2nd Lieut. W. H. F. Hardy resigned his commission (November 22).

Supy. Capt. W. H. Playne to be Major (October 12).

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The year 1903 was marked by the temporary abolition of the distinctive Badminton blue Hussar uniform except for officers attending levees. The new orders prescribed the regulation Service dress for officers, and the drab Service dress, with blue collars and shoulder straps with the letters R.G.H.I.Y. in brass for the men. The cuffs of the jacket were braided with a blue Austrian knot. Bedford cord breeches with a thin blue welt were worn, black boots, blue puttees, and slouch hats turned up on the left side to show the regimental badge in bronze. The cavalry type of saddlery was continued, the officers' chargers wearing the scarlet plume. The new dress was brought into use gradually, one squadron being fitted out at a time. Later (1906) the historic distinctive uniform was restored for ceremonial parades.

The "B" Squadron headquarters were now removed from Badminton to Chipping Sodbury.

In February, 1903, the Secretary of State for War announced that during the absence of certain cavalry

regiments in South Africa, necessitated by the condition of that country, the places of those regiments in the 2nd Army Corps would be taken by the Royal Wilts, Royal Gloucester Hussars, and the Dorset Imperial Yeomanry.

Annual training was held in Badminton Park from May 4 to 21—as usual in dismal weather. Continual rain turned the camp site into a quagmire, and the training was necessarily very much impeded. On the 19th and 20th Major-Gen. Lord Chesham made his official inspection. The strength at training was 414.

On May 30 Major-Gen. R. S. S. Baden-Powell visited Cardiff to receive the freedom of the city, and was escorted by "C" Squadron, under S.S.M. W. Whitehead.

The following letter was received from the 41st Regimental District :

His Worship the Mayor of Cardiff has asked me to convey to all concerned his warm personal thanks for the very kind and generous manner in which the military came forward and assisted so greatly by their presence to make the visit of Gen. Baden-Powell to Cardiff on May 30 such a success. He wishes to offer them, on behalf of himself and his committee, their sincere and hearty thanks for their splendid co-operation on that occasion.

S.S.M. R. T. Robbins, 8th Hussars, died on August 9, and was buried with military honours in Gloucester cemetery on the 13th. He had served the regiment faithfully and loyally for over 21 years, during the last five of which he had been on the permanent staff. "A" Squadron, commanded by Major H. H. Calvert, attended the funeral, and the firing party was furnished by the Cheltenham Troop.

The regiment furnished a squadron 113 strong for the autumn manœuvres. They concentrated at Bowood Park, Chippenham, on September 12, and formed part of the 2nd Army Corps, under F.M. Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.B., until the 18th. The squadron was under the command of Capt. L. A. Grahame Clarke, D.S.O., and

three other officers, Lieuts. W. R. Emmott, A. J. Palmer, and 2nd Lieut. H. F. Clifford. Major & Adj. Lord Charles Bentinck and Staff Sergt.-Majors W. Whitehead, G. Thorneycroft, and W. Gregory accompanied the squadron. They formed part of a composite regiment commanded by Col. Viscount Ebrington, A.D.C., of the Royal North Devon Imperial Yeomanry.

The programme for the manoeuvres was severe, and gave all ranks a fair idea of what active service conditions meant. The nights were chilly, and consequently the cookhouse fires in the early morning proved very popular meeting-places. Two slight casualties occurred during the manoeuvres. A round of ammunition, cleared up with the refuse, was thrown on to the fire, and exploded in the face of Tmpr. H. S. Mertz, of "C" Squadron, who happily recovered in a few weeks. A horse ridden by Pte. H. C. Wintle, of "D" Squadron, was injured by the same explosion, but not seriously.

Major Lord Charles Bentinck's term as Adjutant expired on December 31, and by his retirement the regiment lost the services of a most popular and efficient officer. During his term of office he presented a handsome challenge bowl to be competed for by sections at annual trainings.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1903 :

2nd Lieut. H. F. Clifford attended a course of instruction at the Yeomanry School, Aldershot, from April 1 to 30 and was awarded his certificate as Capt.

Capt. T. H. Cardwell resigned his commission, granted honorary rank of Major, with permission to retain his rank and to wear the prescribed uniform (February 14).

Capt. and Hon. Major G. J. G. C. Codrington resigned his commission, with permission to retain his rank and to wear the prescribed uniform (March 14).

Surgeon Capt. H. Bramwell, F.R.C.S., M.D., to be Surgeon Major (May 20).

Major and Hon. Lieut.-Col. F. Henry resigned his

commission, with permission to retain his rank and to wear the prescribed uniform (October 17).

T. C. Harman to be 2nd Lieut. (December 12).

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On January 1, 1904, Lieut. L. E. H. M. Darell, 1st Life Guards, was appointed Adjutant, and granted the temporary rank of Capt.

The death of Sergt. H. Barnham occurred in January. He was an admirable rifle shot, and was a great loss to the regimental shooting team.

In March the Secretary of State for War again revised the establishments of the yeomanry regiments, reducing them to 476 of all ranks.

In April, 1904, the Duke of Beaufort resigned the command of the regiment. He had served in it for nearly 40 years, and had been Colonel for 17. The Duke was the third of his house to lead the regiment. To the great satisfaction of the regiment the King appointed him honorary Colonel to the regiment on May 14.

Lieut.-Col. H. H. Calvert was gazetted to the command of the regiment on April 16 and Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman was gazetted Second in Command.

The regiment this year trained at Cheddar between the dates of May 4 and 21. The weather at first was various and violent. On the first Sunday, church parade was held in a snowstorm that lasted for half an hour, but three days later the sun shone out brilliantly, and conditions continued excellent for the remainder of the camp. F.M. Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., visited and inspected the camp on the 18th and 19th, and expressed himself as very well pleased. The official inspection was made by Lieut.-Col. Smithson, D.S.O., commanding the 13th Hussars. Strength at training was 387 of all ranks.

Col. Smithson recommended that special attention should be paid to drill by signal. He found that outposts required more practice, and that in musketry practice more should be left to the squadron and troop leaders.



COLONEL H. H. CALVERT, T.D.

Fire discipline was good, and as regards field manoeuvres and reconnaissance Col. Smithson reported very highly of the work done.

In February the headquarters of "B" Squadron were removed from Chipping Sodbury to Yate.

On July 15 "D" Squadron, under the command of Major E. T. Hill, furnished an escort for H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenburg when she visited Bristol, and also when she opened the new nautical school at Portishead. The G.O.C. expressed his warm satisfaction with the appearance and bearing of the several guards of honour, as well as the manner in which the escorts carried out their duties.

The funeral of Gen. Sir R. Campbell Stewart, K.C.B., took place at Cheltenham on December 19, the Cheltenham Troop attending under Capt. J. A. W. Talbot.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1904 :

Sergt. W. Clark, "D" Squadron, was awarded the certificate for the rank of Sergeant on completing a course of instruction from February 2 to 16, at the Yeomanry School, Aldershot.

From June 14 to July 12 2nd Lieuts. H. M. Shaw and J. D. Birchall attended a course of instruction at the Cavalry School, Netheravon, and received certificates for the rank of Lieutenant. 2nd Lieuts. T. C. Harman and F. C. O. de Tuyll also attended this course.

Lieut. V. W. Yorke qualified in musketry at an examination held in the Home District, London (July 29).

Lieuts. J. A. W. Talbot and W. R. Emmott and Lce.-Sergts. G. D. Thomas and J. E. Bowden attended a course at the School of Musketry, Hythe, from July 28 to August 25. All qualified on the termination of the course.

Majors H. H. Calvert and R. P. Sandeman granted honorary rank of Lieut.-Col. (February 13).

Cpts. E. T. Hill and L. A. Grahame Clarke, D.S.O., granted honorary rank of Major (February 13).

F. C. O. de Tuyll commissioned 2nd Lieut. (March 5).

J. D. Birchall commissioned 2nd Lieut. (March 26).

Capt. D. B. Lindsay resigned, and was granted honorary rank of Major, with permission to retain that rank and wear the prescribed uniform (April 2).

H. M. Shaw commissioned 2nd Lieut. (April 30).

Capt. and Hon. Major J. F. A. Herbert resigned, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (May 21).

Capt. C. G. M. Adam and Capt. and Hon. Major E. T. Hill to be Majors (July 16).

Capt. G. F. Henry to be Major (August 27).

Lieut. V. W. Yorke to be Capt. (August 27).

Lieuts. J. A. W. Talbot and W. R. Emmott to be Capts. (September 24).

2nd Lieuts. R. C. Forster and H. F. Clifford to be Lieuts. (September 24).

Capt. H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., late Scots Guards, to be Capt. (November 2).

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In 1905 the Imperial Yeomanry Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was issued for the first time to N.C.O.'s and men who had completed ten years' service and had attended at least ten trainings. Service with the Regulars was not allowed to count in the qualifying period, but all service with the Auxiliary forces counted so long as the last five years had been served in the Imperial Yeomanry and the continuity of the whole service had not been broken for periods of more than one year at a time. Thirty-seven N.C.O.'s and men received the medal on its first issue.

Training this year was carried out under ideal weather conditions at Wells, Somerset, from May 10 to 27. The total strength at training was 365.

Col. T. Porter, C.B., Staff Officer for Yeomanry, Southern Command, inspected the regiment on the 12th, when a reconnaissance scheme was carried out, and on the 13th, when a position was attacked

On the 19th, under the supervision of Lieut.-Col. G. Thesiger, in Command Musketry Duties, Southern Command, the regiment was exercised in a field firing scheme with ball ammunition.

Col. Thesiger commented: "There was a distinct improvement from the previous year. Troop leaders were given a free hand, and in consequence the exercise became more practical. The men worked quietly and very steadily, and the fire was well directed and under good control. Good use was made of cover, and, as far as the ground permitted, extensions were well kept."

The annual regimental prize shooting took place this year on the new range at Sneedhams Green, Gloucester, which had been completed and opened in March by the Lord Lieutenant, Earl Ducie.

At Bisley the regimental team—Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, S.S.M. F. D. W. Hunt, Sergt. P. Hoddell, Pte. J. L. Bennett—succeeded for the first time in winning the Yeomanry Inter-Regimental Challenge Cup. Lieut.-Col. Sandeman won the St. George's Vase at this meeting.

At the County Rifle Meeting held at Bedminster, June 7, the Marden Challenge Cup—value £50—was won on its first presentation by the regimental team. This competition was open to all units, Regular and Auxiliary, connected with the county.

The team was as follows: Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, S.S.M. G. Thorneycroft, S.S.M. J. Heather (Per. Staff), S.S.M. F. W. Hunt, Sergt. E. Hunt ("D" Squadron), Sergt. P. Hoddell ("C" Squadron), Lce.-Sergt. A. Butler, Corpl. J. E. Williams ("B" Squadron), Lce.-Corpl. A. E. Matthews, Trumpeter A. J. Griffin ("A" Squadron), Pte. F. G. Bell ("D" Squadron), Pte. J. L. Bennett ("B" Squadron).

On November 23 "D" Squadron, under command of Major E. T. Hill, furnished an escort for H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenburg when she visited Bristol to open the Exhibition of the Irish Industrial Association.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect this year :

S.S.M. G. D. Thomas and Sergt. J. E. Bowden, of " C " Squadron, attended a course of instruction from July 11 to 27 at the Cavalry School, Netheravon, and received satisfactory certificates on A.F. E.661 on completion of their course.

Lce.-Corpl. O. C. Williams, " D " Squadron, received his certificate as Assistant Instructor in signalling after attending the course at the School of Signalling, Aldershot, from November 15 to December 14.

Capt. and Hon. Major L. A. Grahame Clarke, D.S.O. (Capt. R. of O.), resigned, with leave to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform (January 28).

M. G. Lloyd Baker to be 2nd Lieut. (September 2).

Capt. and Adj. L. E. H. M. Darell, 1st Life Guards, to be Capt. (September 16).

2nd Lieut. F. C. O. de Tuyl to be 2nd Lieut in the 18th Hussars (December 20).

CHAPTER V

SUCCESS OF THE NEW ORGANISATION : HISTORIC UNIFORM RESTORED (1906-1908)

A VERY beautiful memorial window dedicated to the memory of all the men connected with Gloucestershire who fell in the South African War was erected in the Chapter House of Gloucester Cathedral. It was unveiled on February 10, 1906, and the regiment attended the ceremony.

The regiment, after two years' training in Somersetshire, this year camped at Earl Bathurst's Park, Cirencester, from May 14 to 31. This year the system of temporary stables for the horses was abolished and the animals were picketed out, to accustom them to the method of picketing in squadron lines. There had prevailed the idea that the men would not bring out such good horses to training unless provision was made for wooden stabling. It was seen, however, that these stables were draughty and horses consequently suffered from colds. The woodwork of the mangers and supports, being green, after a few days in camp almost disappeared through the horses gnawing it away. Though for a time some still doubted the advisability of putting a valuable hunter on lines in the open, the prejudice was soon overcome by the better health of the animals and the extraordinary improvement in many of the horses at the end of the training period.

The official inspection was made on the 16th and 17th by Col. T. C. Porter, C.B. On the 23rd Lieut.-Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton, commanding the Southern Command, visited the camp, and inspected the regiment carrying out a convoy scheme. Sir Ian Hamilton expressed

himself as well satisfied with the work of the regiment in the following memo. :

O.C. GLOUCESTER IMPERIAL YEOMANRY. G.S. 583/1/3.

At the conclusion of his inspection of the 13 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry in his command, the Lieut.-Gen. C.-in-C. feels it is due to the officers, N.C. officers, and men of these corps to express to them his satisfaction at the high state of efficiency to which they have attained since the new organisation was first brought into force in January, 1905.

The officers belong to a class which is naturally fond of energetic country pursuits ; they are good riders, often already accustomed in a greater or less degree to the management and direction of subordinates. Taking them as a whole, they are certainly above the average in the qualities of initiative, resource, and common sense.

On the more technical side of the military profession they have naturally a very great deal, in some cases almost everything, to learn. On the other hand, a good sprinkling of the senior officers possess practical war experience, and the yeomanry classes and staff rides instituted in this command last winter have already had a distinct effect in raising the general standard.

The non-commissioned officers and men ride boldly and well. In the aggregate they have a very good notion of stable management, and almost half of them own their horses, which are generally of excellent quality. Dismounted, the rank and file show enterprise and intelligence, and in almost every regiment they have learnt to move their led horses in conformity with the lie of the ground, as well as with rapidity and skill. More practice is, however, required in keeping up connection between the dismounted men and the led horses. It is vital to quick movement that the led horses should be ready the moment the order to remount is given.

The musketry efficiency is quite as good as could be reasonably expected, but in many corps sufficient trouble is not taken during field operations to see that the men put their sights to the distance of their objective. Though this may appear a minor point, it is actually most important, for whereas many faults, such as carelessness in taking cover, are quickly corrected by the bullets of the enemy, inaccuracy in judging distance and in adjusting sights is invariably accentuated by the excitement of an actual engagement. Proficiency in this respect can only be ensured by constant practice and supervision by troop officers during the drills.

Nothing could be better than the physique of all ranks. Crime,

even petty crime, is practically non-existent, and drunkenness is rapidly becoming a vice of the past. In all canteens the managers have to deplore the decline of spirits and beer in the face of the advance of lemonade and mineral waters.

On the whole, the high standard of military efficiency displayed by the Imperial Yeomanry in his command, which includes nearly half the total of the yeomanry force in the United Kingdom, has been a revelation to the Lieut.-Gen. C.-in-C., and he is convinced that an effort should be made to concentrate the force for once in a way, so that the good work which has been done may be more generally recognised and not be lost to view, as it is when regiments train individually in remote places, such as Dartmoor or Exmoor, or in some private park. Moreover, yeomanry corps have most of them something to learn from their neighbours, and where a dozen regiments are encamped within a few miles of one another many useful consultations and comparisons could be made by all ranks.

It is on this account that Sir Ian Hamilton has written suggesting that the Commanding Officers of yeomanry regiments might make an effort next year to effect a great concentration on Salisbury Plain, where he would endeavour to give them an opportunity of being manœuvred and criticised by many competent judges.

E. C. BETHUNE, Brig.-Gen.,
General Staff, Southern Command.

H.Q. Southern Command,
Tidworth House, Andover,
July 10, 1906.

This year the Regimental Horse Fund, which had been in existence since 1853, was discontinued, the Government agreeing to admit all legitimate claims for sickness and injury caused by military training.

At Bisley Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman and Pte. J. L. Bennett got into the King's Hundred and obtained the N.R.A. Badge. They were the only representatives of the yeomanry in the final.

The headquarters of "B" Squadron was moved from Chipping Sodbury to Yate.

To the great joy of all ranks the old Badminton blue Hussar kit was in 1906 reintroduced to the regiment, with the exception of the busby for the rank and file.

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The jackets, as before, were closely braided with yellow, but the new overalls had double Hussar instead of single yellow stripes. A plain Badminton blue cap with black peak and the regimental badge in front was used for full and walking-out dress, caps being plain for all ranks, field officers having gold laced peaks. Khaki was retained only as Service dress. The slouch hat was discontinued, and the blue peaked cap was fitted with a khaki cover when Service dress was worn.

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1906 :

Lieut. R. C. Forster and 2nd Lieut. M. G. Lloyd-Baker took a course at the School of Musketry, Hythe, in September, qualifying (Lieut. Lloyd-Baker with distinction).

Corpl. R. R. Beynon, " C " Squadron, took a course of signalling at the School of Signalling, Aldershot, from October 15 to November 14, and obtained his certificate as Assistant Instructor.

Lieut.-Col. H. H. Calvert granted honorary rank of Col. (May 12).

C. A. Chester-Master to be 2nd Lieut. (August 15).

T. J. Longworth (late Lieut., 5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment) to be 2nd Lieut.

Capt. R. M. Yorke, retired pay (late 11th P.A.O. Hussars), to be Capt. (September 12).

C. E. Turner to be 2nd Lieut. (September 29).

R. C. Gordon-Canning to be 2nd Lieut. (November 15).

A. C. Turnor to be 2nd Lieut. (December 13).

The Rt. Rev. Edgar Charles Sumner, D.D., Bishop of Gloucester, late Acting Chaplain, 3rd V.B. the Prince of Wales' Own West Yorkshire Regiment, appointed Honorary Chaplain (December 31).

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The year 1907 was a quiet one in the annals of the regiment, marked by no outstanding events. The ordinary work was carried on with interest and efficiency.

Annual training took place at Piercefield Park, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, in the last fortnight of May, and the regiment encamped for the first time as a cavalry regiment, tents and horse lines together.

The official inspection was made by Col. S. Hegan, Staff Officer for Yeomanry, Southern Command, on the 23rd. A convoy scheme was carried out in an excellent manner. After the operations Col. Hegan expressed his pleasure in the efficiency displayed.

On the 25th the D.A.D.R. visited the regiment in connection with a horse registration scheme.

On June 6 "C" Squadron provided an escort under Capt. A. J. Palmer for H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who visited Newport for the Bath and West of England Show.

On July 17 "A" Squadron, commanded by Capt. J. A. Talbot, attended the ceremony of unveiling a war memorial at Cheltenham in memory of the officers, N.C.O.'s, and men of Cheltenham who had fallen in the South African War.

At Bristol on July 25 the signallers of the regiment were examined, and the following satisfactory report was made :

Remarks, Commandant School of Signalling : " Qualified for full grant. A very creditable performance. The work, though slow, was very accurate, and considering the difficulties attendant in training with men scattered in various localities, the result reflects high credit on all concerned."

Remarks by G.O.C.-in-C. : " Very satisfactory report."

This report was naturally very gratifying to the Adjutant, who had put a great amount of work and enthusiasm into raising the signalling class.

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1907 :

Capt. V. W. Yorke resigned (April 9).

Capt. W. R. Emmott resigned (April 9).

G. N. Horlick to be 2nd Lieut. (March 15).

Lieut. A. J. Palmer to be Capt. (April 10).

Lieut. R. C. Forster to be Capt. (April 10).

Lieut. Sir C. Van Notten-Pole, Bt., granted honorary rank of Capt. (April 30).

Lieut. and Hon. Capt. Sir C. Van Notten-Pole, Bt., resigned, retaining his rank (May 1).

A. W. Clifford (late Capt., 3rd Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment) to be 2nd Lieut. (March 28).

The Hon. H. F. Charteris to be 2nd Lieut. (October 1).

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In March, 1908, under the Territorial Scheme, orders were received to discontinue recruiting the squadron in Monmouthshire, as it was contended that no yeomanry were required in Monmouthshire and recruits offering there were to be drafted into the R.H.A. The regiment was in future to consist of only Gloucestershire men, the recruiting area of "C" Squadron being fixed in North Gloucestershire. These orders were strongly objected to, the matter was taken up at headquarters and the orders cancelled. The close regimental association between the two counties was thus preserved.

The establishment under the T.F. now consisted of 25 officers and 449 other ranks. Total, 474 and 430 horses.

In June the change in designation took effect, the "Imperial" being omitted.

In September the officers were re-gazetted, with rank and precedence as in the Imperial Yeomanry, as under :

Col. H. A. W. F. the Duke of Beaufort, A.D.C., Hon. Colonel, Lieut.-Col. and Hon. Col. H. H. Calvert, Major and Hon. Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, Major (Hon. Capt. in the Army) W. H. Playne, Major G. F. Henry, Capt. J. A. W. Talbot, Capt. (Capt. ret'd. pay) H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., Capt. (Capt. ret'd. pay) R. M. Yorke (to remain Supernumerary), Capt. A. J. Palmer, Capt. R. C. Forster, Lieut. (Hon. Lieut. in the Army) H. F. Clifford, 2nd Lieut. J. D. Birchall, 2nd Lieut. M. G. Lloyd-Baker, 2nd Lieut. C. A. Chester-Master, 2nd Lieut. T. J. Longworth, 2nd Lieut. C. E. Turner, 2nd Lieut. A. C. Turnor, 2nd

Lieut. G. N. Horlick, 2nd Lieut. A. W. Clifford, 2nd Lieut. Hon. H. F. Charteris (to remain seconded), 2nd Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, Surgeon Major H. Bramwell, M.D., Capt. L. E. H. M. Darell, 1st Life Guards, to be Adjutant for the residue unexpired of his tenure.

The regiment assembled for training from May 6 to 23 near Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe. The weather was unfavourable; very wet and cold for the first half of the camp. The field selected for the camp was described by a local veteran to be "the wettest in Gloucestershire," and the approach was a veritable sea of mud, but once the main track was crossed it proved an excellent site.

On the 17th the regiment was exercised in a scheme "Rear Guard Action to a vanquished Force" for inspection by Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton, K.C.B., D.S.O., G.O.C.-in-C. Southern Command. The General expressed himself as very well pleased with the general turn-out and the riding of the regiment, noting particularly the fine stamp of horses brought to training.

On the 20th the Inspector General of Cavalry, Gen. H. J. Scobel, C.B., inspected the regiment in the field and made this comment on the day's work:

"The class of work carried out was precisely what he wished to see. All ranks worked steadily and well, the signallers especially performing their work in a very efficient manner. He was pleased to note the excellent quality of the horses brought up for training, and considered the riding of the regiment very satisfactory."

At the Annual Prize Meeting held at Sneedhams Green on June 29 the Challenge Cup given by Mr. George d' Lisle Bush for competition by teams of 10, was won by "D" Squadron team, with a score of 110.

The team was composed as follows:

Capt. R. M. Yorke, Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, S.Q.M.S. W. S. Bracher, Sergts. F. G. Bell, O. C. Williams, W. Clarke, Corpl. Foden, Ptes. S. Edwards, E. James, H. F. King.

Capt. and Adj. L. E. H. M. Darell attended the cavalry

concentration on Salisbury Plain from August 13 to 29 as A.D.C. to the G.O.C. and Camp Commandant, H.Q. Camp, Cavalry Division.

Col. R. P. Sandeman, Major W. H. Playne, and Lieut. H. F. Clifford attended the cavalry concentration on Salisbury Plain from August 15 to 22.

The signallers of the regiment were examined at Bristol for the second time on July 18 and were very favourably reported on.

On July 9 "D" Squadron, under Major W. H. Playne, furnished a royal escort to Their Majesties the King and Queen on the occasion of their visit to Bristol to open the Royal Edward Dock.

On August 17 a royal warrant was issued granting the Territorial Decoration to officers of the yeomanry. No recognition of their services had been granted up to this time. The following conditions of eligibility were laid down :

(i.) He must be, or have been, a commissioned officer, and have served for 20 years on the active list of the Territorial Force, including commissioned service in the senior and junior divisions of the Officers' Training Corps ; previous commissioned service in the Yeomanry Cavalry, Imperial Yeomanry, or Volunteer Force ; previous service qualifying for the Colonial Auxiliary Forces' or Royal Naval Reserve officers' decoration ; and all service, while holding a Volunteer officers' commission, as an acting or honorary officer of a Cadet Corps or Cadet Battalion, after attaining the age of 17 years.

(ii.) He must be recommended by his C.O., or, if he be not serving, his late C.O.

(iii.) He must be duly certified by his C.O., the infantry brigade and divisional commanders, the commanders of coast defences, and the G.O.C.-in-C., as being an efficient and thoroughly capable officer, in every way deserving of such a decoration. (In order to comply with this sub-para. he must either be fully qualified for his substantive rank or revert to that rank for which he is qualified.) Half of any time during which an officer of the Territorial Force may have served on the active list in the ranks of the force, or in the ranks of the Yeomanry Cavalry, Imperial Yeomanry, or Volunteer Force after attaining the age of 17 years, or in the ranks of a Cadet Corps or Cadet Battalion which

belonged to the organisation existing before May 21, 1910, or as a cadet in the senior division of the Officers' Training Corps after attaining the age of 17 years, will reckon as qualifying service towards the 20 years required. No officer already in possession of the Volunteer Officers' Decoration will be eligible to receive the Territorial Decoration.

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1908 :

2nd Lieut. R. E. Gordon-Canning to be 2nd Lieut. in the 10th Hussars (January 25).

2nd Lieut. T. C. Harman to be 2nd Lieut. in the 20th Hussars (February 15).

A. H. S. Howard (late Capt., Carmarthen R.G.A., Militia) to be 2nd Lieut. (January 1).

Supy. 2nd Lieut. the Hon. H. S. Charteris to be seconded (January 1).

2nd Lieut. H. M. Shaw resigned (February 29).

Major E. T. Hill resigned, retaining rank (March 4).

2nd Lieut. J. H. Horlick to be 2nd Lieut. on unattached list for A.F. (April 1).

A. E. Burchardt-Ashton to be 2nd Lieut. (April 7).

Hon. Lieut. in the Army, the Hon. M. H. Hicks-Beach (late Capt., 4th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment) to be 2nd Lieut. (April 1).

C. J. Ratcliff (late Lieut., 15th Hussars) to be 2nd Lieut. (June 25).

2nd Lieut. A. C. Turnor to be 2nd Lieut. in Royal Horse Guards (December 2).

2nd Lieut. C. A. C. Master to be Lieut. (April 25).

Q.M. and Hon. Lieut. S. W. Adderley (retd. pay, R. of O.) to be Q.M., with honorary rank of Lieut. (August 15).

CHAPTER VI

THE CORONATION OF KING GEORGE V. (1909-1911)

CAPTAIN W. E. LAWRENCE, 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys), was appointed Adjutant to the regiment on January 1, 1909, in succession to Capt. L. E. H. M. Darell, whose resignation took effect on December 31, 1908. During the period of his service Capt. Darell had shown great keenness and energy. The regimental signallers in particular had improved out of all knowledge under his tuition. Residing in the county, and his father having been an officer in the regiment, naturally he became imbued with special interest for the R.G.H. Expressions of regret were heard on all sides when his term of office as Adjutant expired.

"B" Squadron's headquarters were moved on February 1 from Yate to Stroud.

On April 2 His Majesty the King conferred the Territorial Decoration on Col. H. A. W. F. the Duke of Beaufort, A.D.C., Lieut.-Col. and Hon. Col. H. H. Calvert, and Surgeon Major H. Bramwell, M.D.

2nd Lieut. A. W. Clifford was appointed Brigade Signalling Officer on March 12.

On April 15 Col. H. H. Calvert, T.D., completed his term of service in command, and resigned from the regiment, with permission to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform. Col. Calvert's connection with the R.G.H. dated from October 22, 1887, and prior to that he served with the 7th Dragoon Guards. Col. R. P. Sandeman succeeded him.

This year the new organisation in the matter of the annual training became effective. The South Midland Mounted Brigade, under Col. the Hon. O. V. G. A. Lumley,

and in conjunction with the 1st S.W.M.B. (Royal Wilts, North Somerset, Hants Carabiniers, and Dorset Yeomanry) encamped at Perham Down, Salisbury Plain, from May 19 till June 2. The ordinary routine of camp life became very much stiffer, and official inspection, instead of taking place at specific dates, became a matter of almost daily routine. As a rule the regiments began the day by two hours of drill and exercise and then concentrated for brigade drill.

On May 27 tactical operations were carried out between the two brigades to which was attached some artillery from the 3rd Division. Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton directed the operations. The Chief Umpire was Major-Gen. W. E. Franklyn, C.B., the Senior Umpire, Red Force, Col. H. K. Jackson, D.S.O., R.F.A., the Senior Umpire, Blue Force, Major A. Solly-Flood, D.S.O., 4th Dragoon Guards. The G.O.C., Blue Force, was Col. Le Roy Lewis, D.S.O., commanding 1st S.W.M.B. The G.O.C., Red Force, was Col. the Hon. O. V. G. A. Lumley, commanding 1st S.M.M.B.

The regiment formed part of the Red Force. After the operations the brigades witnessed some artillery practice on the ranges at Larkhill.

On May 31 tactical operations were carried out by the whole of the forces on Salisbury Plain, the situation being taken from the battle of the Yalu. The parade ended with a march past at Knighton Down.

An extract from the remarks of the G.O.C.-in-C. :

It is chiefly in honour of the fine yeomanry force now upon the Plain that to-day's field day has been held, and I am specially glad, then, to be able conscientiously to say that they have worked extremely well. Salisbury Plain is a particularly difficult type of ground for yeomanry to manœuvre over. The valleys are broad and open. If a ridge is lost, then it becomes necessary to push rapidly across the intervening valley and find cover behind the coast line of the next ridge before the enemy can gain a fire position on the ground which has been vacated. It is no use halting half way up the next ridge and endeavouring to make

a stand there. The led horses offer too vulnerable a target for such tactics to be possible.

It is only natural that yeomen should have much to learn when they come out for their annual camp, but it is surprising to me as a professional soldier how quickly they pick things up. Most of the yeomanry here have been trained hitherto in close country, but they are already learning the difference between open plains and the ground over which they have been accustomed to work.

Altogether, I am much impressed by what I have seen of the two brigades whose work I have closely followed during the past 10 days, and more than ever convinced that in them the country possess a military force of actual as well as potential value.

On June 1 the following Order was issued by Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton :

When, four years ago, the General C.-in-C. found himself faced by the responsibilities of a new appointment, he resolved, in so far as in him lay, to maintain amongst the troops, Regular and Territorial, entrusted to his charge the high soldierly standard established by his predecessor, Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood. Further, he resolved to try and impart to these same troops the pith of the experience he had then freshly acquired on Manchurian battlefields. Especially did he hope he might be able to influence cavalry against the peace practice of unreal tactics, encourage artillery to perfect themselves in the use of concealed positions, and set some bounds to the extensions of infantry. It is for others to say whether the work of these years has been good or bad, but certainly, if any progress has in fact ensued, then it has been due to the sympathy of all ranks with the underlying aim ; the aim, that is to say, of preparedness and efficiency for war.

The mission of the General C.-in-C. is now at an end. He bids the troops he has commanded a regretful farewell. He salutes his fellow-workers for the last time, and wishes them the best he can wish them—stirring times and rapid advancement.

On the same date—June 1, 1909—the O.C. Brigade issued the following order :

The Brigadier congratulates the 1st S.M.M.B. on the results of the first training together. The keenness and intelligence displayed by all ranks have been most gratifying, and the progress made has been proportionately great. The Brigadier thanks



LT.-COL. R. P. SANDEMAN, T.D.

officers, N.C.O.'s, and men for their excellent work and cordial co-operation throughout, and trusts they will retain as pleasant recollections of the past fortnight on Salisbury Plain as he does himself.

The number present at training was 458.

On June 23 "A" and "B" Squadrons, under command of Major W. H. Playne, provided a royal escort for H.M. the King when he visited the Royal Show held at Gloucester. Capt. and Adj. W. E. Lawrence was Staff Officer to the General-in-Command of the Troops.

At Bisley the regimental team again won the Inter-Yeomanry Challenge Cup with 250 points, the Sussex Yeomanry being second with 248, and the East Riding of York Yeomanry third with 247 points. The team was composed of Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, Lieut. J. D. Birchall, Sergt. J. L. Bennett, and Sergt. O. C. Williams.

On November 19 "C" Squadron, under Capt. A. J. Palmer, took part in the ceremony of unveiling a memorial at Cardiff to the Welsh soldiers who fell in South Africa.

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1909 :

Surgeon Major H. Bramwell, M.D., to be Surgeon Lieut.-Col. (March 31).

Capt. J. A. W. Talbot to be Major (February 20).

Lieut. H. F. Clifford to be Capt. (February 20).

2nd Lieut. C. E. Turner to be Lieut. (February 20).

M. A. Sands to be 2nd Lieut. (March 1).

H. G. de Lisle Bush to be 2nd Lieut. (April 1).

Major and Hon. Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman to be Lieut.-Col. (April 16).

Veterinary Lieut. J. E. L. Still to be Veterinary Capt. (April 10) and transferred to the unattached list.

Capt. (Capt. ret'd. pay) H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., to be Major (June 3).

Supy. Capt. (Capt. ret'd. pay) R. M. Yorke is absorbed into establishment (June 3).

H. M. Calvert to be 2nd Lieut. (September 1).

2nd Lieut. A. E. Burchardt-Ashton to be 2nd Lieut. in 4th Dragoon Guards (December 8).

Supy. 2nd Lieut. the Hon. H. F. Charteris restored to establishment (December 8).

In this year busbies and plumes in place of the blue cap were again worn by all ranks when in full dress. The change, it is said, was made at the instance of King Edward VII., who had noticed at a parade of the regiment the incongruity of the blue forage caps with the full dress tunics, and had sent for Col. the Duke of Beaufort and had spoken to him on the matter.

On April 2 a reconnaissance scheme was held for "A," "B," and "D" Squadrons, between Olveston and Berkeley.

The annual training took place on Salisbury Plain. Brigade Camp was held at Windmill Hill from May 7 to 21 with the 2nd S.M.M.B. (Bucks, Berks, and Oxford Yeomanry). Col. R. P. Sandeman commanded the regiment.

Owing to the death of H.M. King Edward VII. on May 7, bands did not play, and no social functions of any sort took place during training.

The new syllabus of training was adhered to. The first six working days were devoted to troop and squadron training entirely under C.O.'s. The instructions were progressive and based on cavalry training, dismounted action, and protective cavalry.

(A) Reconnaissance to locate the enemy and keep in touch with his movements; to collect and transmit information; duties of patrols.

(B) Seizing and occupying suitable ground for observation or defence; screening duties.

(C) Fire action dismounted; attack and defence of posts, bridges, etc.

(D) Rapid concentration for attack or defence; care to be taken to avoid unnecessary galloping.

On the 12th Major-Gen. E. H. H. Allenby, C.B., Inspector General of Cavalry (afterwards C.-in-C. Palestine), made his inspection of the brigade in the field. The regiment took part in a scheme against the Warwick Yeomanry.

On the 14th a "Rearguard Action" scheme was carried out. Major W. H. Playne commanded the Red Force, which was composed of "B," "C," and "D" Squadrons. Major G. F. Henry commanded the Blue Force, "A" Squadron.

On the 17th a brigade tactical scheme was held. Col. Sir Henry Grey, Bt., Worcester Yeomanry, commanded the White Force, and the Brown Force was under Col. R. J. Beech, Warwickshire Yeomanry. The regiment formed part of the Brown Force. On the 18th tactical operations were carried out by the whole of the troops on the Plain, ending with a march past. The director of operations was Lieut.-Gen. Sir C. Douglas, K.C.B., the Senior Umpire was Brig.-Gen. R. C. B. Haking, G.S., Southern Command. The G.O.C. Brown Force was Brig.-Gen. T. G. Drummond, C.B., M.V.O., and the G.O.C. White Force was Col. C. M. Brunner, D.S.O.

All parades and training were suspended from 12.45 to 1.15 on May 20, and no work was carried on during this time, while the funeral of the King was taking place. The brigade was formed up in column to church parade order and the massed bands played funeral marches.

An extract from a report on the training reads :

The regiment is in an efficient state, well trained, well commanded, with a good set of officers, and practically up to establishment. The camp was clean and in a sanitary condition, the messing good.

The professional examinations for officers in "A" and "C" were carried out during training on May 18 and 19. Passed in "C": Majors C. G. M. Adam, G. F. Henry, and H. C. Elwes, M.V.O. Passed in "A": Lieut. C. A. C.

Chester-Master, 2nd Lieut. G. N. Horlick, 2nd Lieut. A. W. Clifford, 2nd Lieut. the Hon. H. F. Charteris, 2nd Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, 2nd Lieut. the Hon. M. H. Hicks-Beach, 2nd Lieut. M. A. Sands, 2nd Lieut. M. G. de Lisle Bush, and 2nd Lieut. J. T. Colledge.

The following order was published at the end of training :

The Brigadier congratulates the 1st S.M.M.B. on the satisfactory work performed during the annual training, and thanks all ranks for the energetic and zealous manner in which they have worked. As this is probably the last occasion on which the Brigadier will have the pleasure of commanding the brigade, he wishes to convey to officers, N.C.O.'s and men his deep appreciation of their excellent behaviour and unfailing willingness and devotion to duty, and his only regret is that he had no opportunity of leading so fine a body of men on active service.

The strength at training was 430.

The following officers of the regiment were attached for the Cavalry Divisional training on Salisbury Plain to regiments as under :

Major W. H. Playne to 11th Hussars from September 3 to 8.

Lieut. T. J. Longworth to Royal Scots Greys from August 26 to September 10.

2nd Lieut. the Hon. H. F. Charteris to 11th Hussars from August 26 to September 10.

2nd Lieut. the Hon. M. H. Hicks-Beach to 19th Hussars from August 29 to September 3.

The annual inspection of the signallers took place this year during annual training, and the G.O.C.-in-C., Southern Command, complimented the signallers on their keenness.

On June 27 the Brigadier, Col. the Hon. O. V. J. A. Lumley, handed over command to Col. R. C. B. Lawrence, C.B., on being appointed O.i/c., Cavalry Records, York.

S.S.M. W. Whitehead received his discharge on account of age, having served 33 years and 134 days.

On December 30 the G.O.C.-in-C., Southern Command, made an inspection of headquarters at Gloucester.

This year a system of spoon shoots was instituted in connection with the annual prize meetings, to be shot for on the same dates as the competition for Col. Butler's Cup. Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman very kindly gave a cup for the best aggregate in the spoon shoots, and Lieut. J. D. Birchall gave the spoons.

At Bisley the regimental team was placed fifth in the competition for the Inter-Yeomanry Challenge Cup.

On May 10 there was a team shoot in the evening by squadrons on Sidbury range. "A" Squadron was first, "B" Squadron second, "D" third, and "C" fourth.

The following appointments, promotions, and resignations took effect in 1910 :

Q.M. and Hon. Lieut. S. W. Adderley (Q.M. and Hon. Lieut. retd. pay, R. of O.) granted honorary rank of Capt. (January 18).

J. T. Colledge to be 2nd Lieut. (April 1).

The Rt. Rev. E. C. S. Bishop of Gloucester, D.D. (late Acting Chaplain, R.G.H.I.Y.), to be 3rd Class Chaplain to the Temporary Force, ranking as Major, with precedence as from May 2, 1907 (April 1, 1908).

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A regimental tour was held at Oxford by the 1st and 2nd S.M.M.B. from April 3 to April 5, 1911. Major W. H. Playne and Capt. H. F. Clifford attended.

After two brigade camps in succession on Salisbury Plain the regiment returned to camp at Badminton this year from May 6 to May 20. Camp was pitched on the "Slait," adjoining the park. All squadrons, troops, and detachments within 20 miles of the camp proceeded by route march. Col. R. P. Sandeman commanded.

On May 16 and 17 the Brigadier made respectively a regimental inspection and an inspection of a scheme against the North Somerset Yeomanry, who were encamped near Bath. The regiment was 424 all ranks.

On May 19 the regiment telegraphed congratulations on his birthday to the Duke of Beaufort, who was in London. He sent his cordial thanks and good wishes in reply.

The ceremonies of the coronation of Their Majesties King George V. and Queen Mary took place on June 22 and 23. The regiment was represented by one officer and 25 other ranks, who were encamped in Kensington Gardens for four days. The detachment formed part of the 1st Battalion of the Coronation Brigade under the command of Col. the Hon. H. Lawson, T.D., M.P., the whole of the yeomanry being formed into two battalions for this occasion. Review dress was worn, with rifles and bandoliers.

On the 22nd the position held by the yeomanry was Hyde Park Corner. The 1st Battalion extended down Piccadilly on that day and the next from White Horse Street to Old Bond Street, Major W. H. Playne being in command of the party R.G.H.

The following W.O., N.C.O.'s, and men were chosen to represent the regiment :

R.S.M. J. Heather.

" A " Squadron

Sergt. G. Turk	Pte. G. Hyatt
Corpl. F. R. E. Kenward	Pte. P. W. Millard
Pte. G. Corson	Pte. E. Rock

" B " Squadron

S.Q.M.S. R. Cox	Pte. A. L. Cox
Lce.-Cpl. C. C. Godwin	Pte. F. T. T. Parslow
Pte. J. Cross	Pte. J. E. Scarrott

" C " Squadron

Sergt. E. L. Donne	Pte. F. Day
Pte. T. F. Clarke	Pte. T. Jones
Pte. E. M. Cowles	Pte. C. Pearce

" D " Squadron

S.S.M. W. S. Bracher	Lce.-Corpl. H. W. Fussell
Sergt. W. J. Young	Pte. H. S. Bould
Lce.-Corpl. J. C. Blanch	Pte. L. G. C. Holloway

The Coronation Medal was awarded to Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, Major W. H. Playne, Capt. and Q.M. S. W. Adderley, R.S.M. J. Heather, and Pte. J. Cross.

The regimental team was placed fourth at Bisley this year in the Inter-Yeomanry Challenge Cup.

The G.O.C., South Midland Division, held tactical exercises at Cirencester from October 15 to 18, and the following officers of the regiment attended : Major W. H. Playne, Lieut. M. G. Lloyd-Baker, 2nd Lieuts J. T. Colledge and H. B. Gething.

Capt. and Adjt. W. E. Lawrence finished his term as Adjutant on December 31, 1911, much to the regret of all ranks.

The report this year said : " A well-trained regiment with a good body of officers and an excellent C.O."

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1911 :

2nd Lieut. C. J. Ratcliff resigned (March 25).

H. B. Gething to be 2nd Lieut. (Supernumerary) (March 25).

Major J. A. W. Talbot resigned (December 6).

CHAPTER VII

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM (1912-1914)

ON January 1, 1912, Capt. A. Carton de Wiart, 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, took over the adjutancy of the regiment.

On February 21 Capt. A. J. Palmer was transferred from "C" to "A" Squadron to command, *vice* Major G. F. Henry, resigned.

A memorandum from the War Office was circulated this month, stating that in future, during annual training, "separation allowance" would be granted to all married men in camp, provided they were present for the whole time of the training. The rates fixed were as follows :

Wife of Q.M.S. (or equal rank)	2s. 1d. per diem
Wife of S.S.M. or S.Q.M.S. (or equal rank)	1s. 4d. „ „
Wives of other N.C.O.'s and men	1s. 1d. „ „
Girls under 16 or boys under 14 years	1s. 2d. „ „
Ditto, if motherless	1s. 4d. „ „

The regiment put in its annual training on the same ground as during the previous year, at Badminton, from May 11 to 25, under the command of Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman. On the 21st and 22nd the Brigadier inspected the regiment, putting it through a tactical exercise on the second day. The strength of the regiment, all ranks, was 421.

The King and Queen visited Bristol Infirmary on June 22, and "D" Squadron, under Capt. R. M. Yorke, furnished a travelling escort and took part in the royal procession. His Majesty's approval and thanks were conveyed to the regiment for the military arrangements.

The King specially mentioned the smart appearance of his escort.

A brigade tactical exercise was carried out at Worcester on October 15 and 16, and the following officers took part : Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, Major W. H. Playne, Major H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., and Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart.

The following promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1912 :

Major G. F. Henry resigned (February 3).

A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave to be 2nd Lieut. (Super-numerary) (March 12).

2nd Lieut. A. W. Clifford resigned (May 29).

Capt. (Capt. ret'd. pay) R. M. Yorke to be Major (May 27).

Capt. A. J. Palmer to be Major (May 27).

Rt. Rev. E. C. S. Bishop of Gloucester to be 1st Class Chaplain, ranking (from April 1, 1908) as Col.

Lieut. J. D. Birchall to be Capt. (July 24).

Lieut. M. G. Lloyd-Baker to be Capt. (July 24).

2nd Lieut. G. N. Horlick to be Lieut. (July 24).

2nd Lieut. Hon. H. F. Charteris to be Lieut. (July 24).

Supy. 2nd Lieut. J. T. Colledge absorbed into the regimental establishment (May 29).

Supy. 2nd Lieut. H. B. Gething absorbed into the regimental establishment (May 29).

Supy. 2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave absorbed into the regimental establishment (May 29).

A. W. Strickland to be 2nd Lieut. (Supy.) (October 1).

J. A. W. Talbot (late Major) to be Major, T.F. Reserve (December 4).

A. W. E. Guise (late Lieut., 3rd Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment) to be 2nd Lieut. (Supy.) (December 1).

S.S.M. Thorneycroft due to pension (October 31).

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The regiment lost this year its Commanding Officer through the resignation of Col. R. P. Sandeman, T.D.,

upon the completion of his service in command, after 21 years' service. His resignation was received with genuine regret. Col. Sandeman had served in the 6th Dragoon Guards and 10th Royal Hussars for 12 years. He put heart and effort into his work for the R.G.H. and instilled much of his own keenness in shooting and his appreciation of soldierly qualities into the men. He had the great satisfaction of leaving the R.G.H. one of the best shooting regiments in the yeomanry.

A brigade camp was held this year on Salisbury Plain, the regiment assembling on May 10 and being dismissed on May 24 at Bulford.

Some interesting work was done. The G.O.C.-in-C., Southern Command, Gen. Sir H. L. Smith-Dorrien, K.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., inspected the squadrons at work in the field as well as the camp upon his return from the field.

On May 14 the Inspector-General of Cavalry, Major-Gen. E. H. H. Allenby, C.B., made his inspection of work in the field.

On May 17 the regiment carried out a tactical scheme in driving back an enemy force of cavalry. On May 21 a similar scheme was carried out, the White Force being under Major R. M. Yorke and the Khaki Force under Capt. H. F. Clifford. The Umpires were Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne, Major H. C. Elwes, and Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart. On May 23 the regiment took part in a tactical exercise against the Warwick Yeomanry, the commanders being Col. F. Dugdale, C.V.O., W.Y., and Major H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., R.G.H.

The signallers, who had been equipped with a heliograph, were inspected on May 21 by Lieut. J. W. Cobb, 18th Hussars, who gave them a very satisfactory report. For the first time, too, the stretcher-bearers were examined by Col. W. H. Bull, the A.D. of M.S.M.D. All the men obtained certificates for efficiency.

On May 22 a parade was held for the inspection of the whole of the troops on Salisbury Plain between Tidworth

and Perham Down by Gen. Sir H. L. Smith-Dorrien. The regiment saw an aeroplane of the 3rd squadron R.F.C. and the Central Flying School fly past for the first time.

The regiment was 417 strong this training, and the confidential report was most satisfactory.

On May 20 examination "A" was held under Col. R. C. B. Lawrence, C.B., with Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart. 2nd Lieuts. A. W. Strickland, A. W. E. Guise, the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert, and F. A. Mitchell all passed fully qualified in "A."

Capt. H. F. Clifford qualified in examination "C" at Bulford Camp and Lieut. C. E. Turner in examination "B" at Tidworth.

On July 4 "D" Squadron, under Lieut. C. E. Turner, furnished an escort to H.M. the King when he visited the Royal Agricultural Show held at Bristol.

The following officers took part in a brigade tactical exercise under Col. R. C. B. Lawrence, C.B., held at Gloucester from October 30 to November 1: Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne, Major H. C. Elwes, Major A. J. Palmer, Major R. C. Forster, and Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart.

On the 22nd and 23rd a regimental tactical exercise was held at Gloucester under Lieut-Col. W. H. Playne, and the following officers took part: Lieuts. T. J. Longworth, G. N. Horlick, 2nd Lieuts. M. A. Sands, J. T. Colledge, A. W. Strickland, A. W. E. Guise, Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart.

The following awards, promotions, appointments, and resignations took effect in 1913:

Lieut. T. J. Longworth attended the rifle qualifying course at the School of Musketry, Hythe, from September 1 to 20, and qualified.

Lieut. G. N. Horlick took the Maxim gun course in September and qualified.

Capt. H. F. Clifford was attached to the 11th Hussars at Aldershot from October 20 to November 1 and awarded a certificate.

2nd Lieuts. J. T. Colledge, H. B. Gething, the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert, and F. A. Mitchell attended an initial course of instruction at the Southern Cavalry Depôt from October 12 to November 8, and were awarded satisfactory certificates.

Supy. 2nd Lieut. A. W. Strickland absorbed into the regimental establishment (February 8).

The Hon. E. J. B. Herbert to be 2nd Lieut. (to be Supy.) (February 15).

F. A. Mitchell (late Cadet, Oxford University Contingent) to be 2nd Lieut. (Supy.) (February 24).

Col. H. A. W. F. the Duke of Beaufort, T.D., A.D.C., granted an extension as Honorary Colonel of the regiment for a further period of five years from April 1.

The King was graciously pleased to confer the Territorial Decoration upon Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman.

Lieut.-Col. R. P. Sandeman, on completion of his period of command, was retired, with permission to retain his rank and to wear the prescribed uniform (April 16).

Major W. H. Playne (Hon. Capt. in the Army) to be Lieut.-Col. (April 16).

J. A. W. Talbot (late Major, R.G.H.) to be Major (December 4).

Major (Hon. Lieut. in the Army) C. G. M. Adam resigns his commission (January 25).

2nd Lieut. H. G. de Lisle Bush resigns his commission (February 8).

Capt. L. E. H. M. Darell, 1st Life Guards, to be Brigade Major, 1st S.M.M.B., from December 11, *vice* Major W. Pepys, Warwick Yeomanry.

2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave followed an initial course of instruction at the Eastern Cavalry Depôt, Woolwich, from March 4 to 31, receiving a satisfactory certificate.

Major W. H. Playne attended a tactical exercise at Oxford under the G.O.C., South Midland Division, from March 6 to 9. Capt. R. C. Forster was awarded a

satisfactory certificate while attached to the 11th Hussars from March 17 to 29, and also qualified in examination "C," held at Aldershot on March 29.

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The year 1914, up to the declaration of war against Germany, was singularly quiet for the soldier, but it was hardly a happy quietness. The kingdom was tossed and vexed by many unhappy dissensions. In Ireland civil war threatened. In England serious labour strikes, the "Suffragette" disturbances, and an unexampled bitterness in party political strife, seemed seriously to threaten social order. The general vexation and dejection of the public mind had naturally its reflection in the defence forces. As the clouds of the Great War began to gather few were fully confident that their country could meet the coming crisis with resolution and dignity. All pessimism was to be confounded in the result. But there was good reason for the forebodings with which 1914 opened.

The R.G.H. carried on its usual routine in 1914, broken only by the choice of a seaside camp for the annual training.

On January 1 the following officers were transferred to and from squadrons as under :

Capt. J. D. Birchall from "C" to "B."

Capt. T. J. Longworth from "B" to "C."

Lieut. G. N. Horlick from "C" to "D" for machine guns.

Lieut. M. A. Sands from "C" to "D."

Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne held a tactical exercise for the regiment at Tetbury on January 10 and 11, when the following officers took part : Capt. T. J. Longworth, 2nd Lieuts. J. T. Colledge and F. A. Mitchell, Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart.

In March another tactical exercise was held by Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne at Fairford. Major A. J. Palmer, Major R. C. Forster, Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker, Capt.

T. J. Longworth, Capt. C. E. Turner, Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, Lieut. the Hon. M. H. Hicks-Beach, and Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart took part.

On April 18 Major H. C. Elwes, M.V.O., was appointed second in command of the regiment, and Major H. F. Clifford was appointed to command of "B" Squadron.

Under the new Army Orders of 1913 eight motor cyclists were allowed for each regiment. Accordingly, Ptes. G. L. Kent and H. L. Whitaker from "A" Squadron, C. L. Harding from "B," M. G. Perkins from "C," and G. B. Fry, A. Rowe, and J. W. Sandell from "D," were appointed as Lce.-Corpl. motor cyclists.

Patcham, near Brighton, was chosen for the annual training, and for the first time in its long history the regiment was encamped near the sea. It was a pleasant change, and was appreciated by the men. Training took place between May 9 and 23. Col. W. H. Playne commanded the regiment. On May 16 a tactical scheme was carried out, "A" and "B" Squadrons being commanded by Major A. J. Palmer, "C" and "D" by Major R. M. Yorke. The Brigadier made his official inspections on May 19 and 20.

2nd Lieut. J. C. Bengough successfully passed examination "A" this month.

Lieut. H. M. M. Robertson, R.F.A., inspected the signallers on the 20th. They were commended for sound work and excellent knowledge of the subject.

On the 21st a tactical exercise was carried out, the opposing forces being "A" and "D" under Major R. M. Yorke and "B" and "C" under Major H. C. Elwes, M.V.O.

A local course of musketry was held in the Drill Hall at Cheltenham in the first week of June. The following officers and N.C.O. attended and duly qualified: Lieut. G. N. Horlick, Lieut. the Hon. H. F. Charteris, 2nd Lieut. J. T. Colledge, and S.S.M. G. Turk.

On June 27 Col. Lawrence gave up command of the

brigade, expressing his thanks to the regiment for the excellent work done in the past four years.

Capt. and Adj. A. Carton de Wiart gave up his appointment, sailing for Somaliland on July 23.

A. A. Lord Apsley (late Cadet Colour-Sergt., Eton College Contg., Junior Division, O.T.C.) was appointed 2nd Lieut. (Supy.), April 9.

Lieut. J. Godman, 15th Hussars, took up duty as Adjutant July 30.

The regiment was ordered to mobilise at 7 p.m. on August 4, 1914.

CHAPTER VIII

ON GUARD IN ENGLAND (1914-1915)

THE German military party (and that was practically all Germany) profited by the obstinate optimism of other European peoples to bring their preparations for the onslaught upon Europe in 1914 to a point which represented perfection in the view of their army commanders. In our country, statesmēn simply would not believe that Germany, prospering vastly as she was in peace, able to win extreme diplomatic concessions by the inexpensive means of bluster, in possession of a vast Colonial Empire, and on the point of getting a great sphere of influence in Asia, could really contemplate war. Even when a huge German war loan was raised, and when a system of training the old and the decrepit to take on the work of agriculture in war time was set up in Germany, Great Britain refused still to believe that the catastrophe of a world war immediately threatened civilisation. But German militarism was resolute. It had come to believe in war, not as a necessary evil or as a last resort, but as good in itself and a wholesome exercise for a growing nation.

In August, 1914, therefore, having neatly arranged that Austria-Hungary (which was not ready and did not wish for a European war) should be first involved irremediably, Germany made her move. Her plan was to roll France in the dust and then humble Russia ; Great Britain would, the while, be cajoled into neutrality. To secure the speedy despatch of France it was necessary, the Germans thought, that an overwhelming force should be flung at her along a wide front. A passage direct into France through one of the strategic defiles between



OFFICERS, R.G.H., AT VB

Standing:—Left to Right.

Lieut. G. N. Horlick.
 Lieut. Lord Apsley.
 Lieut. Gething.
 Lieut. Viscount Quenington.
 Lieut. F. Mitchell.
 Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave.
 Lieut. Lord Elcho.
 Lieut. Hon. Herbert.
 Lieut. A. S. H. Howard.
 Lieut. T. Strickland.
 Lieut. Bengough.
 Lieut. A. M. Sands.
 Lieut. A. C. Duncan, R.A.V.C.



Y, NOV., 1914.

Sitting :—Left to Right.

Lieut.-Col. Bramwell.
 Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker.
 Major H. Clifford.
 Major R. C. Forster.
 Major A. J. Palmer.
 Lieut.-Col. W. Playne.
 Hon. Col. the Duke of Beaufort.
 Major H. C. Elwes.
 Major R. M. Yorke.
 Capt. C. E. Turner.
 Capt. W. S. Adderley.
 Capt. & Adj. J. Godman.

fortress systems seemed to threaten dangerous delays. So it was arranged that Belgium and Luxembourg were to be used as a field of development. Resistance on the part of Belgium was not anticipated and the Belgian fortress system in any case was not of great strength. It had been designed on a plan to withstand invasion from France as well as invasion from Germany, that being Belgium's idea of her duty as a neutral state whose independence was guaranteed by both Germany and France ; so such strength as the Belgian defence preparation had was halved as against Germany.

But Great Britain, after a period of painful hesitation on the part of the Government, was true to her traditions and to her highest interests. She threw in her weight—which was ultimately to prove the decisive factor—against Germany, and mobilised the first four divisions (and subsequently the fifth division) of the Regular Army and sent them to the help of the French in Flanders. That decision stripped the country almost bare of fully trained troops. It was a complete departure from what had been frequently expressed as the military policy of Great Britain in the event of a European war—reliance on the Regular Army to resist any attempted invasion whilst the Territorial Forces were embodied and subjected to six months' intensive training, when the Regular Army would be released for foreign service.

The decision showed courage, for there was no doubt that at the time the Germans confidently reckoned on being able to invade England before the close of 1914. A letter quoted in the biography of Mr. Page, who was the United States of America Ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1914, gives an indication of the German confidence in this regard. It is from the recreant English wife of a German in Bremen :

Well, I have, of course, a divided mind. I think of those old days in Liverpool and Devonshire—how far off they seem ! And yet I spent all last year in England. It was in March last when I was with you, and we talked of the amazing treatment

of your Army—I cannot any longer call it *our* Army—by ministers crying for the resignation of its officers and eager to make their humiliation an election cry! How far off that seems, too!

Let me tell you that it was the conduct of your ministers . . . that made people here so confident that your Government *could* not fight. . . .

As to the future, you cannot win. A nation that has prided itself on making no sacrifice for political power or even independence must pay for its pride. Our house here in Bremen has largely been by way of a centre for naval men and to a less extent for officers of the neighbouring commands.

They are absolutely confident that they will land ten Army Corps in England before Christmas. It is terrible to know what they mean to go for. They mean to destroy. Every town which remotely is concerned with war material is to be annihilated. Birmingham, Bradford, Leeds, Newcastle, Sheffield, Northampton, are to be wiped out, and the men killed, ruthlessly hunted down.

The fact that Lancashire and Yorkshire have held aloof from recruiting is not to save them. The fact that Great Britain is to be a Reichsland will involve the destruction of inhabitants, to enable German citizens to be planted in your country in their place. German soldiers hope that your poor creatures will resist, as patriots should, but they doubt it very much, for resistance will facilitate the process of clearance. Ireland will be left independent, and its harmlessness will be guaranteed by its inevitable civil war.

You may wonder, as I do sometimes, whether this hatred of England is not unworthy, or a form of mental disease. But you must know that it is at bottom not hatred, but contempt—fierce, unreasoning scorn for a country that pursued money and ease, from aristocrat to trade-unionist labourer, when it has a great inheritance to defend.

I feel bitter, too, for I spent half my life in your country, and my dearest friends are all English still; and yet I am deeply ashamed of the hypocrisy and make-believe that has initiated your national policy and brought you down.

For some time after August, 1914, to be able to wreak vengeance on England was indeed the dearest wish of the German heart. The secular hatred of the French was for a while forgotten. The "Hymn of Hate" expressed the true Teutonic feeling of the moment—that England, "treacherous England," was the chief foe. It is not

difficult to understand this. Germany had confidently reckoned on Great Britain standing out of the war, at any rate in its first stage. She had judged that the country which was content with an Army contemptibly small in numbers was without martial spirit, and that the internal dissensions then rife in these islands would in any case paralyse the national will. But she saw all her calculations spoiled by the British obstinate adherence to national honour and by the British audacity in sending the Regular Army on to the Continent.

It was the task of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, as of other Yeomanry and Territorial units, to stand on guard over the homes and fields of England for nearly a year after the declaration of war. The order to mobilise, received on the evening of August 4, 1914, was carried out with promptness. The Gloucestershire Yeomanry assembled with the Warwickshire Yeomanry at Warwick, and were joined then by the Worcestershire Yeomanry on August 12. This reproduced the old 1st South Midland Mounted Brigade of the Bulford Camp of 1913.

The brigade moved on to the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmunds. There were frequent rumours of enemy landings, and the yeomanry were kept constantly on the alert, night alarms being numerous. At the end of August the brigade stationed at Newbury Racecourse linked up with the remainder of the 2nd Mounted Division on the Berkshire Downs. It was reported that the division was to proceed to France, and colour was given to the report by an inspection of the division by His Majesty the King and by Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton. When in October the brigade was ordered to entrain "for an unknown destination" all thought that the destination was France, but it proved to be the East Coast of England, and for some months the regiment was stationed there, waiting for the Germans who never came, and seeing their first bloodshed of the war during a Zeppelin raid.

In September, 1914, orders were received to form a second Regiment of R.G.H. under the command of Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Sandeman, T.D., and later on a third Regiment of R.G.H. was formed under the command of Lieut.-Colonel H. H. Calvert, T.D.

During the early months of 1915 the R.G.H. continued coast patrol duties. In April came the call for Overseas Service, but it was not for the French Front. The strategists of Downing Street had committed the nation to the Gallipoli Expedition, a campaign which was to bring great glory to the British arms, but was to be of dreadful cost and barren of useful results. Indeed it may be said that great care had been taken to ensure failure. The Gallipoli Peninsula might have been "rushed" by a comparatively small force of troops at any time shortly after the Turkish declaration of war against Great Britain. As if to give full notice to the enemy, the Peninsula was attacked in the first instance by a naval force, the political strategists having an obstinate opinion that naval guns could be used effectively to reduce the land forts of the Dardanelles. Naval guns already had proved themselves useless for decisive action against concealed targets on the Belgian coast, but that fact was overlooked or ignored. The naval attack upon Gallipoli was entered upon. It failed—as was inevitable—after serious sacrifice of men and ships. After an interval, as if to allow the enemy to take full advantage of the notice he had been given that we had designs on the Peninsula, the military effort was launched.

It was the destiny of the R.G.H. to see their first active service of the Great War in Gallipoli. How they acquitted themselves there, and during the subsequent Palestine Campaign—which was, perhaps, the most perfectly planned and completely decisive of the whole war—the following chapters of their history will tell.

CHAPTER IX

THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN (1915)

THE R.G.H., three squadrons strong, entrained at Hunstanton on April 10, 1915, for Avonmouth. The next day, with the other units of the 2nd Mounted Yeomanry Division, the regiment embarked to join the British Mediterranean Force on the transports *Minneapolis* and *Saturnia*. Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne was in command. They were to form, under Brig.-Gen. Wiggin, the 1st Mounted Brigade of the 2nd Mounted Division, under Major-Gen. Peyton, of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. The embarking strength was :

Headquarters, including attached 10 officers, 107 O.R., 88 horses, 28 mules, 8 vehicles.

" D " Squadron (Major R. M. Yorke), 4 officers, 135 O.R., 133 horses, 14 mules, 3 vehicles.

" B " Squadron (Major H. F. Clifford), 6 officers, 134 O.R., 131 horses, 14 mules, 3 vehicles.

" A " Squadron (Major A. J. Palmer), 7 officers, 134 O.R., 133 horses, 14 mules, 3 vehicles.

The ordered destination of the transports was Malta. On the way was passed the *Wayfarer*, carrying the horses of the Warwickshire Yeomanry, which had been torpedoed by the enemy. The other transports were not allowed to stand by for her assistance, but were ordered to make at full speed for the open sea.

Malta was reached on April 21 and orders received to proceed to Alexandria. On April 24 the R.G.H. disembarked at Alexandria, and, after spending a night in the streets near the dock, marched into camp at Chatby

Beach, near that city. Their first welcome to the East was a severe sand-storm.

The regiment arrived at Chatby Camp without having lost a single horse or mule on the journey from England. This showed good horsemastership, and was due also to the splendid way in which those officers and men who were not overcome by seasickness took on the work of less fortunate comrades during the sea voyage.

At Chatby the regiment was severely tried by an outbreak of what was called "Chatby fever," but which seems to have had its origin, not in Chatby, but in some billets which the men had occupied in England before their departure. The symptoms were somewhat like those of jaundice, and sufferers experienced very high temperatures.

The duties of the R.G.H. whilst at Chatby were chiefly in connection with providing guards at various headquarters and camps in and around Alexandria. Squadron drill in rather confined areas took place in the early morning, with musketry exercises and lectures later in the day and bathing for horses and men.

The regiment was called upon to provide a mounted escort to the 1st Sultan of Egypt on the occasion of his first official entry into Alexandria. Men and horses to the strength of a squadron under Major R. M. Yorke paraded, and the best traditions of the R.G.H. were worthily upheld.

In order to give squadrons better facilities for training, each squadron in turn proceeded to Aboukir Bay for a week. It was during this period that the first casualty to the regiment since its arrival overseas occurred. Whilst on duty as sergeant of the guard at Ras el Tin, Sergt. Vick, much to the regret of all ranks, was suddenly taken ill and died.

The horses and mules found the heat of the unsheltered lines at Chatby very severe after the cool breezes of the East Coast of England. Their food, considerably changed from what they had been accustomed to, did not help the

situation, but by careful and constant attention they kept their condition wonderfully well, and they gradually became acclimatised to withstand the far greater trials which they had to face later in the campaign. Chatby was about the only place where the locusts made their appearance in any large quantities.

On August 11 unexpected orders came for the yeomanry to proceed to Gallipoli, dismounted. Each regiment was to leave four officers and 100 O.R. and all its horses in Egypt. Infantry web equipment was served out to all ranks. The R.G.H. forgot all regret at thus becoming infantry in delight at the prospect of coming face to face with the enemy and in satisfaction at the remembrance that they had always been famed at home for their musketry, and now there was work to do with the rifle.

But the new equipment was altogether unfamiliar ; no officer or N.C.O. had seen it before ; and when the regiment was paraded for final inspection on August 13 at Alexandria it probably did not rival the Foot Guards in smartness of bearing. But it was soon to show that it could do the work of infantry with the best.

On Saturday, August 14, 1915, 15 officers and 346 O.R.'s embarked at Alexandria.

On board the *Haverford* : Major H. C. Elwes, 2nd Lieut. E. T. Cripps, 9 A.S.C. Drivers, 8 M.G. Drivers, 40 N.C.O.'s and men, " D " Squadron, 15 N.C.O.'s and men, " A " Squadron, 36 mules, 9 vehicles.

On board the *Ascania* : Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne, Major R. M. Yorke, Major A. J. Palmer, Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker, Capt. T. J. Longworth, Capt. C. E. Turner, Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, Lieut. Visct. Quenington, Lieut. M. A. Sands (attd. Worcestershire Yeomanry), 2nd Lieut. H. B. Gething, 2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, 2nd Lieut. A. W. Strickland, 2nd Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert, Capt. J. Godman (Capt. and Adjt.), 274 N.C.O.'s and men. 2nd Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) J. T. Colledge, A.D.C. 1st S.M.M.B., Major S. W. Adderley, Q.M., Lieut.

G. N. Horlick, Machine Gun Officer, R.S.M. Robertson, Sad. Sergt. A. Honey, and others attached to brigade staff also embarked on S.S. *Ascania*.

The regiment was organised as follows :

Lieut.-Col. W. H. Playne.

Major H. C. Elwes, 2nd in Command.

Capt. and Adjt. J. Godman.

" A " Squadron

Major A. J. Palmer	Lieut. Viscount Quenington
Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker	2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave
Capt. T. J. Longworth	2nd Lieut. A. W. Strickland
160 other ranks	

" D " Squadron

Major R. M. Yorke	2nd Lieut. H. B. Gething
Capt. C. E. Turner	2nd Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert
Lieut. A. H. S. Howard	2nd Lieut. E. T. Cripps
160 other ranks	

At sea all ranks were inoculated against cholera. That, and the prospect of submarines (the *Royal Edward* had been sunk by a submarine on August 14), were the only troubles of the voyage, which was favoured by splendid weather. On August 17 early in the morning the regiment arrived at Mudros, which was advanced base for the Gallipoli Campaign. Leaving a first reserve of officers at Mudros under Major H. C. Elwes, with Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker, Capt. C. E. Turner, and 2nd Lieuts. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert and A. W. Strickland, the remainder of the regiment transferred to the paddle steamer *Queen Victoria*, formerly on the Isle of Man service, and went on to Suvla Bay, landing on " A " Beach at midnight on August 17. As the *Queen Victoria* left the transport *Ascania*, perilously loaded with about 2,500 of all ranks, the men on the *Ascania* cheered heartily, and in response a yeomanry officer sounded on his hunting horn " Gone

Away." To that fitting note the yeomanry moved into the narrow shell-swept area of Gallipoli.

A few months before, on April 25, the 29th Division and the Anzac Corps had opened an immortal and tragic chapter of British military history. The Gallipoli landing on rough, open beaches was in the teeth of a heavily entrenched Turkish force. The "beaches" were very narrow, and protected by barbed wire. The cliffs, which rise sheer from them to the height of a hundred or more feet, were filled with rifle-pits and machine-gun emplacements strongly manned. The area of the landings was dominated by the great height of Achi-Baba, six miles away. The Turkish positions commanded ours "as the balconies of a theatre overlook the stage," as Sir Ian Hamilton said.

The losses were cruel before land was touched. The beaches when reached were mere strips of shingle, enfiladed by artillery and rifle fire. Above were almost inaccessible cliffs, bristling with Turks. But in that spirit of supreme heroism which comes now and again in the world's history to lift our thoughts to the stars, the attacking troops won through from the sea to the beach, from the beach to the cliff; and after fierce fighting for two days and two nights found themselves in possession of a tiny patch of the Gallipoli Peninsula. But not a yard of the area they held was free from the enemy fire, and the force depended for all supplies, including water, on what could be brought to the beaches under fire. By an impossible effort they had won an impossible position, and they held it.

The pressing task was then to seek to extend our hold on the Peninsula so as to secure some ground free from enemy fire. The repeated assaults on the Turkish line at Krithia had this purpose. Yard by yard of Turkish ground was won—600 yards after three days' fierce fighting by three British and two French divisions.

So through April, May, June, July, the struggle went on without any great change. Thirst and hunger were

added to the trials of the troops, for in some weather communication was absolutely impossible because of the surf on the open beaches, and always it was difficult and dangerous, for we still did not hold any ground nor any landing-place safe from shell fire. The Germans came to the aid of the Turks with leaders and with guns, eager to drive into the sea these mad adventurers whom the Fates seemed to have delivered into their hands. On our side it was recognised by many that to advance was impossible, but the determination was unflinching to hold on until additional forces should come to enable another attack to be made.

In August a final effort was made, and to reinforce the final stage of that effort was the task of the yeomanry. On August 21 the entire division, including the R.G.H., was bivouacked on Lala Baba Hill, and in the afternoon moved on to Chocolate Hill. There was no cover, and the regiment came under very heavy shell fire before reaching the hill. 2nd Lieut. Gething was killed, Lieut.-Col. Playne severely wounded, Capt. Longworth dangerously wounded, Lieut. Howard severely wounded, and 2nd Lieut. Colledge, Brigade Staff, severely wounded.

The division concentrated under Chocolate Hill, and at 5 p.m. advanced in the direction of Hill 112, the Worcesters in front line, the R.G.H. in support.

The R.G.H. machine guns, which had been carried by men of the section the previous night from the bivouacs at Suvla to Lala Baba, were again carried across the Salt Lake to Chocolate Hill, where they were ordered to remain. They were able to come into action at 1,200 yards on the Turkish trenches in the very early morning.

After an advance under dropping fire over very difficult country, the regiment reached the front line of trenches held by the 29th Division. Then, owing to the approach of dark, the heavy losses of the 29th Division, the number of Turkish machine guns, and the uncertainty of the



R.G.H., SUVLA BAY

enemy's position, it was decided that a further direct advance was impossible.

" D " Squadron and Major Yorke (now in command of the regiment) and Capt. Godman rejoined the brigade about 300 yards in rear of the 29th Division and dug in for the night. At 2 a.m. on Sunday, August 22, the order was received to retire on Lala Baba. The retirement was carried out in perfect order, with trifling loss.

" A " Squadron (Major Palmer) had advanced on the evening of the 21st to a Turkish trench, which on arrival proved to be the front line trench held by men of the 29th Division. The order to rejoin the brigade was received about midnight. Every effort to locate the regiment or brigade failed, the night being very dark, and, except from places where the scrub was alight, machine gun and rifle fire continued all night. An empty trench was occupied about 200 yards from the front line, and as soon as it was light the squadron proceeded back to Chocolate Hill, sustaining only two casualties *en route*, to find that the division had retired to Lala Baba the previous evening. Major Palmer reported the arrival of the squadron at Chocolate Hill by telephone to the brigade, and had orders to remain there till dark and then return to Lala Baba. These orders were, however, cancelled about 8 p.m., as the division returned to Chocolate Hill that night.

Our losses on the 21st to 22nd were : Officers killed, 1 (Lieut. Gething). Officers wounded, 4.

Other ranks killed and died of wounds, 11. Other ranks wounded, 44. Other ranks missing, 1.

The following message was received from General Peyton :

Major-Gen. Peyton wishes to be conveyed to all ranks of the 2nd Mounted Division his high appreciation of their bearing on the first occasion they took part in the general engagement. He watched with pride the steadiness of the movement from Lala Baba to Chocolate Hill under heavy shrapnel fire, and, later, the gallantry and determination displayed in the attack.

He deplores the loss of our gallant comrades who fell, and knows their memory will stimulate all ranks to maintain in the future the high reputation the division has already earned for itself.

Brig.-Gen. Kenna, V.C., who commanded the division, has already conveyed to me his admiration of the conduct of all ranks throughout the day, especially of the 2nd Mounted Brigade in reaching Hill 70, in spite of heavy casualties and the loss of their gallant commander, Lord Longford.

W. E. PEYTON, Major-General.

The C.-in-C., Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton, in his despatch on the operations of this day said :

The advance of these English yeomen was a sight calculated to send a thrill of pride through anyone with a drop of English blood running in their veins. Such superb martial spectacles are rare in modern war. Ordinarily it should always be possible to bring up reserves under some sort of cover from shrapnel fire. Here, for a mile and a half, there was nothing to conceal a mouse, much less some of the most stalwart soldiers England has ever sent from her shores. Despite the critical events in other parts of the field I could hardly take my glasses from the yeomen ; they moved like men marching on parade. Here and there a shell would take toll of a cluster ; there they lay. There was no straggling ; the others moved steadily on ; not a man was there who hung back or hurried.

On August 22 the division marched to Chocolate Hill and dug in. Major Palmer with " A " Squadron now rejoined, and also Lieut. Lord Quenington and 2nd Lieut. Cripps. The men who had given up their lives were buried where they fell under Chocolate Hill and their graves marked : 2nd Lieut. H. B. Gething, Sergt. A. T. Honey, Ptes. R. H. Coxwell-Rogers, N. W. Jenner, C. E. Carter, O. K. Fowler, Lce.-Corpl. W. Barton, Pte. Kearney.

Pte. E. T. Crocker was buried by a medical burial party. One man R.G.H. was buried unrecognised.

For some days now the regiment remained in reserve at Chocolate Hill. There were during this time several

casualties owing to shell fire. On September 4 the regiment took over a section of the support trenches from Munster Fusiliers. The division at this date was reorganised into two brigades, the first of which under Gen. Wiggin, had its 1st regiment under Col. Wight-Boycott, made up of the R.G.H., under Major Elwes, the Warwicks, and the Worcesters. On September 7 the R.G.H. relieved the Warwicks in the front line trenches, and for some days now these two units alternated in the front and support trenches. On September 18 Gen. Wiggin was wounded, and Lieut.-Col. Wight-Boycott took over the 1st Brigade and Major H. C. Elwes the 1st regiment and Capt. C. E. Turner the R.G.H. Major R. M. Yorke had been appointed to command the Berks Yeomanry, who had suffered severe losses in officers and men on August 21. There being a superfluity of officers in the trenches, Major A. J. Palmer had been sent in charge of a party of about 24 officers from the division to Mudros to establish an Officers' Rest Camp there. (All these officers were allotted jobs within a very few days, and Major Palmer returned from Mudros on September 30.) On September 26 the regiment moved into second line reserve. The next day Major R. M. Yorke returned from the Berks Yeomanry and took over the command from Capt. Turner.

Casualties from wounds during this period were frequent, but far more serious were the inroads of disease. The "sick parade" grew in strength day by day. On September 29 there were 26 from "A" Squadron and 15 from "D" Squadron on sick parade, and of these 10 had to be evacuated to Field Ambulance. The total strength of the regiment on this day was 169, compared with 218 on September 12, and of these 169, 10 were "no duty" and 20 "light duty."

R.S.M. Turk left the regiment on September 29 for Alexandria to take up a commission in the Ordnance Corps. He had seen 21 years' service with the regiment and was greatly esteemed by all ranks. He was reported as seen at 6 a.m. on the morning of August 5, 1914, riding

his horse fully equipped to join up at H.Q., Gloucester, on mobilisation.

The regiment remained in the reserve trenches until October 8, evacuating batches of men to the Field Ambulance almost every day (mostly sick, but a few wounded). On October 8 it marched to the A 63 front line trench, relieving the 3rd County of London Yeomanry.

On October 8 2nd Lieut. A. M. McGrigor was appointed A.D.C. to the C.-in-C., Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton.

On October 10 the Turkish trench mortars were very active, and one bomb killed outright Lce.-Corpl. R. Hulbert, mortally wounded Lce.-Sergt. H. B. Walker, Pte. H. L. Holborow, and Lce.-Corpl. F. R. Rowe.

On October 12 the regiment changed places with the Worcesters and occupied A 65 Section. It was a much drier and more comfortable section. The weather was now much colder.

On October 15 Major Yorke went on leave to stay at Divisional H.Q. Major Palmer took command of the regiment in the trenches. Losses from wounds and sickness continued to be heavy, and it was now impossible for the 1st regiment in its weakened condition to hold Sections A 63-65 of the firing and support trenches. The support on one night was represented by one officer's servant and one cook—a total of two. The Herts Yeomanry accordingly moved up to their support. The effective strength of the regiment on October 17, all ranks, was only 95, and of these 4 were "no duty" and 23 "light duty." On October 18 Major Yorke returned. On October 20 the regiment was relieved and marched to the Salt Lake reserve trenches.

The relief came not a day too soon. The regiment had suffered so severely through battle casualties and sickness that in order to keep up duties all the sound men and most of the sick were on sentry *every* night (one hour on, two hours off). On October 22 the men were greatly cheered by the receipt of the following message from Major-Gen. Peyton :

The G.O.C. 2nd Mounted Division wishes to convey to all ranks his very great appreciation of the soldierlike qualities and fortitude which have been so markedly evinced during the last two months.

In the face of the heavy losses sustained in the action of August 21st, followed by exposure for ten days in a cramped and crowded situation to incessant shell fire, which caused many casualties, the division has been called upon whilst continually under fire, and suffering from ravages of sickness, to carry out abnormal physical and manual exertions to maintain and improve our defences.

The time has now arrived that the troops should be withdrawn and rested, and the G.O.C. feels sure that when the reinforcements arrive and the regiments are reorganised they will return with the same indomitable determination to face all hardships and difficulties which the service of their King and country may demand.

The personal diary of an officer gives a vivid picture of the hardships suffered by the regiment during this time :

August 19.—Suvla Bay. The boat we landed in was a Bristol pleasure steamer—a good omen. Country here very broken with low, thorny scrub, rocks and stones on clay soil. Shelling. Dug ourselves into temporary graves—just long enough to hold me—2 ft. deep and built up all around with earth, a stone at my head, two pieces of wood (that I had found floating in the sea) in the middle, and my mackintosh sheet as a sun shelter. The firing line about three miles off. Worst job fetching water, all of which comes from Alexandria by ship. The men are wonderful ; they make jokes all the time. I bathed in the afternoon. Smith had a shell in the water when he was bathing. Warships reply to Turks now and again. It is a dry country and you don't want a lot of washing. Drinking water very scarce.

August 20.—A five inch centipede wished to share my valise with me. Weather good ; warm in the day, cold at night.

August 21.—Regiment have gone to Lala Baba in reserve. The flies are beginning. We live entirely on bully and biscuit and lime juice.

August 23.—On Chocolate Hill commanding a squadron in a dug-out, very deep and narrow. Wind blows a shower of dust every few minutes. The Regulars, 29th Division, say the sight the day before yesterday of our men marching in spite of very

heavy shelling was wonderful. We all look beastly dirty and mud-stained.

August 25.—Support trenches Chocolate Hill. Haven't had my boots off for four days. We eat out of our mess tins. Flies very bad.

August 26.—Front line trenches. Digging ammunition trench in moonlight, sniped all the time. Trench very smelly. Four dead Turks found buried in corner. You can't imagine how interesting and beastly it all is. Sniping constantly and bursting of shells. One man dropped his sham teeth in the battle the other day and has had to go to hospital as he cannot bite the biscuit; it is just like dog biscuit.

August 28.—Chocolate Hill. Heavy shelling. We lost several men. Doctors and stretcher-bearers earn V.C.'s every day. Flies are awful. An enamel cup to wash in. Taking up rations with mules. Sniped all the way. Boxes constantly coming off the mules. Ground garnished with dried thistles and dead men. Trenches most complicated and face different ways. One has to be careful with cuts; they fester. Teaching the men to throw bombs.

September 3.—Chocolate Hill. Poisoning from the swarms of flies. Living on malted milk which is supplied to men who are ill.

September 7.—Cator House trenches. Clay soil, very damp. Heaps of water. Fairly safe place, but flies very bad. Lots of hedges and trees and scrub, fig trees, elms, and poplars. We crave for sweet things.

September 16.—Cator House trenches. Cold and wet. Men very cheerful. Communion service held in trenches. We are getting very weak—started 320 and now muster 180. Mostly dysentery attacks. We get a wash most days if we are not too busy.

September 21.—Lots of blackberries close by. I crawled out and picked my cap full. I am going to give them to the cook to mix with the rice. The weather just now is perfect, hot in the day but cool at night. Clouds of flies.

September 26.—Reserve trenches. We, the officers, have a row of dug-outs 7 ft. long by 4 ft. wide and 4 ft. deep, with a communication trench at the side. They are like cupboards. No head cover. Quite restful here, as we can only hear the snipers in the distance. A depressing thing is seeing your best men going down with dysentery. Horlick's malted milk is the proper diet. These reserve trenches are half way between Anzac and "A" Beach, a quarter of an hour's walk from the beach.

Except rifle and kit inspection we do nothing but lie in our dug-outs. We heard good news from France last night and the Scottish Horse cheered. Result: a heavy *strafe* all along the line. I have taken my trousers off the last two nights and got inside my flea bag with only a shirt on. Very comfortable after sleeping with all one's clothes and boots on for the last three weeks. The brigade is now only 250 men, started with 960 men. The stay in Alexandria was bad for the men.

October 3.—Hospital ship *Gameka*. Hot baths, good food. Champagne. You can't think how one enjoys the peace and quiet.

On October 23 Major Yorke left to take over command of a composite yeomanry regiment at Salonika. With him went Captain C. E. Turner and other officers from regiments in the 2nd Mounted Division. Major A. J. Palmer now assumed command of the regiment.

Major Yorke and Captain Turner went to Salonika by the transport *Japanese Prince* in November and had an adventure with a submarine on the journey across the Mediterranean, which Captain Turner describes:

We had been joking about the glassy-like sea for submarine purposes when one suddenly appeared 3,000 yds. to our starboard after-quarter. She fired three shots, which fell 200 yds. aft, and then got the range and started on us. We had no gun and no wireless, so looked to be in a pretty bad way, as our ordinary steaming is only eight knots. She fired about 20 shots, which all came round us, then she ceased firing and drew in nearer and more on our beam (note nautical terms). Then she opened again and fired 43 shots from her four-inch guns with shrapnel and H.E. Luckily, though we got a few lumps of shell aboard she never managed to get a direct hit. Ralph (Major Yorke) and the captain on the bridge had a pretty thin time, as many of the shells were evidently intended for them. We sent relays of men down into the stokehold and managed to get another three knots out of the old tub, and by keeping her stern towards the submarine gradually crept away in the darkness, though for a long time we saw the light of her supply ship following in our wake. It was not till 11.30 that it eventually disappeared.

Our boat drill of the previous afternoon and our busy morning provisioning the boats, etc., looked as though they had been very opportunely performed. There was no confusion of any kind and not a breath of panic. Everything went in drill time,

and we lay down (by numbers) in the darkness, not a light of any description on board, whilst (as the books say) the shells screamed overhead and burst with deafening report all round us. We have 500 mules aboard, and their hungry wailing (they had missed their evening feed) was the only sound heard aboard save the throb of the engine and the sounds of swearing and shovelling coming from the stokehold.

The strength of the regiment on October 23, all ranks, was 102, of whom 11 were detached, and of the 91, 2 were "no duty" and 21 "light duty." Capt. A. E. Bullock, R.A.M.C., rejoined the regiment from Cairo.

The first public hint that the Gallipoli attempt was to be abandoned came on October 27, when it was announced that Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton was succeeded by Gen. Sir C. C. Monro as C.-in-C. The attack of August, in the last stage of which the R.G.H. had assisted, marked the last effort to break through. It was really then clear that a further attempt was impossible. Unfortunately the decision did not follow promptly on the events which made it inevitable. A long, long interval followed, during which sickness ravaged the troops almost as seriously as had the guns of the Turks. It was a tribute to the almost superhuman courage shown by the British troops that during this long interval the Turks made no serious attempt to attack them, and finally allowed the force to withdraw from the Peninsula almost without interference.

On October 28 it was announced that Major H. C. Elwes had been promoted to Lieut.-Col. while commanding the 1st Regiment (dated 18/10/15).

On October 31 the regiment embarked for Lemnos, leaving behind 2nd Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert and 10 men of the Machine Gun Section, who were attached to the Scottish Brigade, and 2nd Lieut. J. C. Bengough, who remained at the Bombing School, Cape Helles.

The regiment as it embarked for Lemnos consisted of :
Lieut.-Col. H. C. Elwes, Comdg. 1st Regiment.
Major A. J. Palmer, Comdg. R.G.H.

Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker.

Lieut. Viscount Quenington.

Lieut. M. A. Sands.

2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave.

Lieut. G. N. Horlick, Bde. M.G. Officer.

Capt. A. E. Bullock, R.A.M.C. (T.).

Major S. W. Adderley, Bde. Q.M.

Machine Gun Section	I
" A " Squadron, N.C.O.'s and men	29
" D " Squadron, N.C.O.'s and men	40
Detached (1st Regt. and Bde.) ...	11

Total	81
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So concluded the first term of active service overseas in the Great War. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry had acquitted themselves manfully in their rôle of infantry. They had gone with credit through one serious action, and for three months had carried on cheerfully under the stress of constant shell fire, heavy ravages of disease, and never-ceasing fatigue.

On November 4, at Mudros, Brig.-Gen. E. A. Wiggin resumed command of the 1st Brigade. On November 9, in consequence of the departure on leave of the senior officers, Lieut. Lord Quenington was left in command of the regiment. During the following week drafts arrived to reinforce the regiment, and these drafts, with other troops, were reviewed by General Lord Kitchener, who was then visiting the Gallipoli front to come to a final decision on the question of evacuation.

On November 15 Capt. C. J. Ratcliff, Lieut. A. E. W. Guise, 2nd Lieut. R. G. Anderson, and 122 O.R.'s joined from the reinforcement camp, and the regiment was told off into two squadrons of three troops each and a Machine Gun Section of 16. Lieut. C. C. Herbert joined on November 17 and Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker and Lieut. M. A. Sands rejoined from hospital the next day. The strength on November 18, all ranks, was 183.

On November 22, 1915, the regiment embarked from South Pier, and were lightered on to the transport *Themistocles*, which sailed for Alexandria. Some sick rejoined from hospital, and the R.G.H. landed at Alexandria 13 officers and 197 O.R.'s strong, and proceeded to Mena Camp, near Cairo.

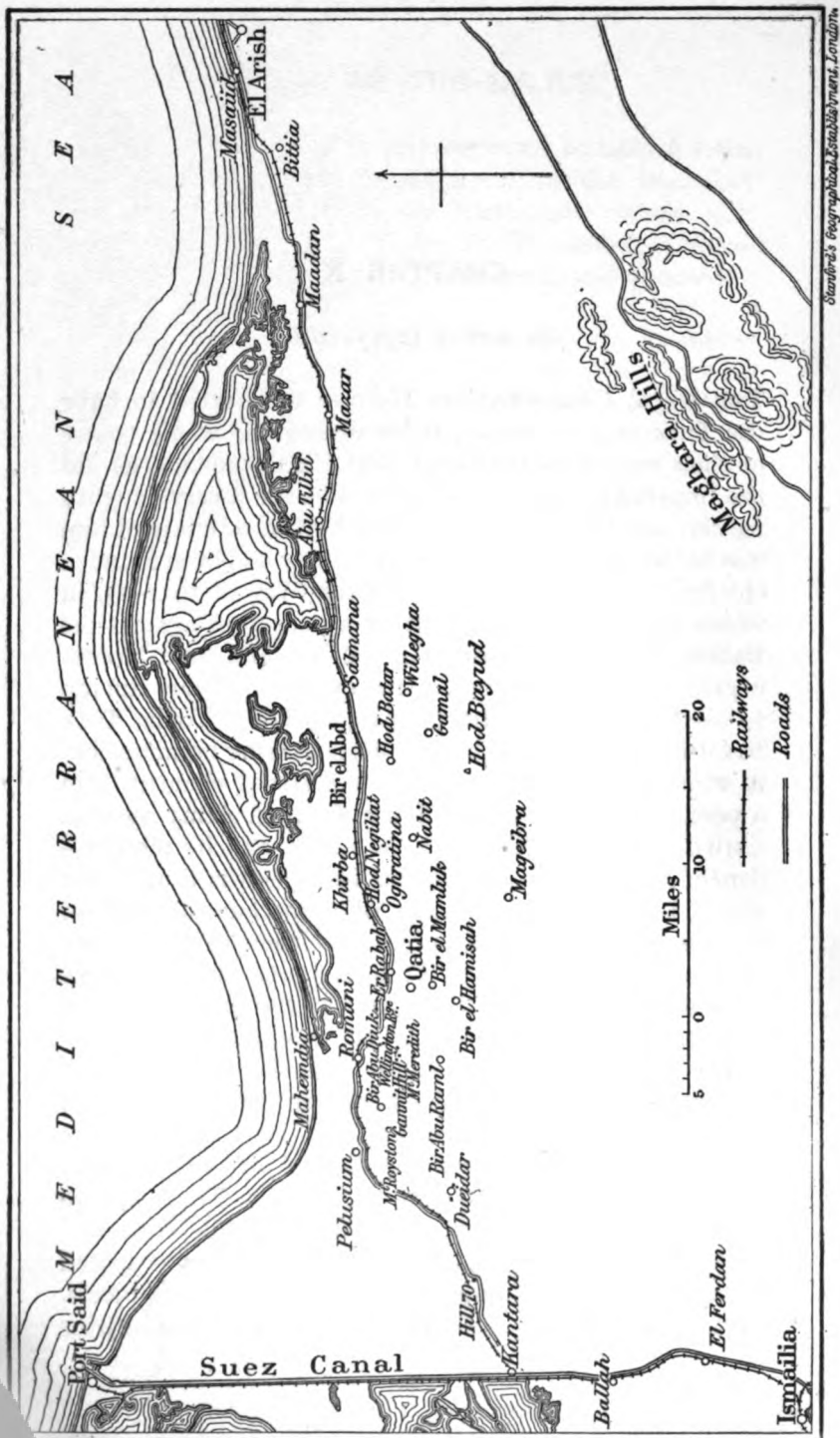
The R.G.H. had now before them work of a character more suited to their training. They had taken part in the most tragic chapter of the war. They were destined in the future to assist in its most complete victory, with their swords to help to free the Holy Land from the enemy and to force the surrender of the Turkish Empire.

CHAPTER X

IN EGYPT (1915-1916)

THE Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were fated to have the Turk as their principal foe during the whole course of their service in the Great War. They found—as did the Imperial troops generally—that he was a very doughty fighter, and that the current 1914 British estimate of him was not at all a just one. That estimate had been founded chiefly on the events of the Balkan War of 1912-13, in which the Turk certainly put up a poor fight against the Balkan League of Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Montenegro; but for a variety of reasons he had not run up to his true form in that campaign. The “Young Turk Reform” had changed his old Moslem Army organisation, in which religious fanaticism was a strong element, into a poor kind of imitation of the German Army system. Christians were admitted to the Army, and its morale—dependent so much on religious feeling—was thus badly affected. The German ideas of a mechanical kind of organisation did not find a prompt welcome in the Turkish character, for, whilst the Turk is brave and can show both stubbornness and enterprise in the field, he is not responsive to “wooden” ideas of discipline.

The German, in addition to his racial incapacity for dealing with people like the Turks (in the last stages of the Palestine Campaign the effects of this antipathy were to be noted), from the very first did not play straight with him. He was always out to exploit the Turk, not to help him. I can recall in 1912 coming to the “fortress” of Kirk Kilisse, in Turkish Thrace, which was supposed to have been made “impregnable” by German engineers. Certainly the money had been paid out for a big fortress



system, but there was nothing to show for it except two brick "forts" which would not have withstood the fire of mountain batteries. Further, the Turkish Armies in the Balkan Peninsula in 1912-13 which were hustled out of Macedonia and Thrace by the Serbs, the Bulgars, and the Greeks, hardly represented the best of the Ottoman forces. The best were mobilised in Asia Minor, for it was expected that a European Power would join in the struggle by attacking Smyrna. In the last great battle of the 1912-13 campaign—that of Chatalja—the Turk had rallied his strength, had brought up some of his Anatolian levies, and was able to hold his own against the Bulgarian Army under General Radno Demetriefi. The general impression, however, left by the events of the Balkan Campaign, 1912-13, was that the "Sick Man" of Europe was moribund, that he had lost his military virtues and would offer an easy victory to his next enemy. The events of 1914-15 proved that that was altogether incorrect. It is important to know the existence (and the causes) of this false estimate, for it goes far to explain the Gallipoli and the Egypt events of 1914-15-16.

We have seen that in the Gallipoli Campaign the victory rested with the Turks. True, the attempt to carry the Peninsula was an impossible one, and, *pace* all the politicians' explanation of how very near we were to success at certain stages, there was never a shadow of a reasonable hope of success. We might have gone on winning bloody battles on the Peninsula; we could never have won the Dardanelles, and the cost of our effort must always have been in disadvantageous disproportion to the cost of meeting it by the enemy. Only on the theory that the Turks were of contemptible fighting value could the Gallipoli gamble have been undertaken or persisted in, and that theory was false.

On this point the following are extracts from a very interesting letter written by an officer who visited the Peninsula in 1922 :

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I have been spending a week on the Gallipoli Peninsula seeing all that in 1915 we were so anxious to see, and which, ever since, has remained so much of a mystery. Amongst other things I was able to see the cemeteries at Green Hill and Hill 10, where most of the yeomen who fell are buried. I do not think that many of the old Yeomanry Division have visited the Peninsula since those days, so what I am writing may be of interest to some. . . .

After a few days in Constantinople I went to Chanak and thence over to Krithia, where some Australian officers are quartered who are doing the work of putting the cemeteries in order. They very kindly put me up while I was there, and gave me no end of help over grave records, getting me about the country, and so on. Without their help I should not have been able to do much.

It was queer setting foot on Gallipoli again, and under such different circumstances. My first trip, of course, was to get over to Suvla. I left in a Ford car one morning and was at Gaba Tepe, overlooking Imbros, in 15 minutes! Then along the coast past Brighton Beach to Chocolate Hill—all well under 50 minutes. It rather staggers one compared with our [former] rate of progress!

The Green Hill cemetery is on the saddle between Chocolate and Green Hills. In it are buried all those who were previously buried in the various small cemeteries, or individually around there. At present there is only a wire fence around it, which is to be replaced by a wall. The cemetery is in the shape of a cross, the only one I think so shaped out there. There is a clear inner space in the shape of a cross, and the graves are in rows outside it and between it and the wire fence, the upper portion containing unidentified graves and the lower portion identified graves. There is a mound over each grave which is to be turfed over. On each identified grave there is a wooden cross with the name and regiment, and over each unidentified grave a small post with an oval at the top. The crosses and posts are to be replaced by small memorial stones, and at the top end of the cemetery I understand there will be a stone altar and cross. The number of unidentified graves is rather large, which is accounted for by: In 1915 we only had one identity disc, which was removed at time of death, so that if the cross or mark over a man's grave happened to be destroyed by bush fire (as they usually were) or removed, there was nothing upon the body, when disinterred, to establish identity.

Most of the yeomen are in this cemetery, and evidently most of those who were killed on August 21 and whose bodies were



LT.-COL. W. H. PLAYNE, T.D.

recovered. I noticed graves of men belonging to every yeomanry regiment and a number belonging to "London Yeomanry," but there is much to be done in getting regimental titles correct, such as 1st or 2nd regiment, etc. I understand that all records at the I.W.G.C. at Krithia will be checked before the permanent memorials are put up, which I consider will be very necessary, as I noticed many errors in regimental titles, partly the fault of our cumbersome Territorial titles. A more appropriate site for the resting-place of those yeomen could not have been found, within sight of Salt Lake, where they were first blooded and where many fell, also Ismail Oglu Tepe (or Hill W) and Scimitar Hill (or Hill 70).

Away to landward, Kavak Tepe ; the two villages of Anafarta (both very little knocked about, and the trees still near them) ; Sari Bair, grim and impassable, and Anzac. Seawards, Suvla Point, the Bay, Lala Baba. Beyond, that lovely blue sea we all knew so well. In the distance Samothrace, forbidding, and with peaks often cloud topped. To the north Imbros, fittingly appearing gloomy, out of the picture. The plain all round Chocolate Hill, sunlit and peaceful, a few patches under crops and cultivation by the Greeks, but there are few people about, the plain dotted with trees much like an English landscape. . . .

Cemeteries under any circumstances are not beautiful, and these at Gallipoli are no exception. They are sharp when looked at in detail, but when viewed from the distance, say from Sari Bair, it is quite different, and they are just like patches of daisies in the landscape. I hope that no one will ever photograph these cemeteries, but if only some clever water-colour artist could get the effect of it all it would be very different. They are all very well looked after. I doubt whether Gallipoli will ever be much visited, certainly not until such time as there is accommodation and means of getting about, neither of which exist at present.

It was most interesting reconstructing some of the operations again, and taking my seat in a comfortable stall in the Turkish lines on Churuk Bair. The Suvla theatre of operations lay in a piece of country like a saucer, with a bit broken out where the sea would be, commanded from everywhere as regards observation and fire. I doubt whether the capture of Scimitar Hill and Ismail Oglu Tepe and Anafarta would have helped us, or even had we got Kavak Tepe whether we should have been again faced with ranges of hills and subsidiary spurs, all of which were densely bushed.

Anzac is incredible ; the impossible somehow made possible—a network of hills, precipices, ravines, and gullies, all choked

with bush and all directly under Turkish observation and fire—and yet they stayed there and gained ground.

Helles is a revelation—the impossibilities of landing, which was somehow made ; the enormous front held ; and the distance of the objective. An awkward country to fight in, though it looks fairly easy.

Whether they would have got much farther had they taken Achi Baba is an open question, as it is a devil of a country after ; so was Anzac. If the plan of operation was to get astride the Peninsula, the best point, leaving out the Bulair line, is a nice open bit between Gaba Tepe and Krithia, but the Turks were apparently prepared there.

The more I studied it the more impossible it appeared, and as a tactical problem would, I think, be turned down. Once the surprise of landing and capture had failed there would be no hope of success, unless carried out on a colossal scale, and I doubt whether Gallipoli would lend itself to anything colossal. All that seems to have been achieved is a remarkably fine example that if people will defy all the principles of warfare they must expect failure. It is rather sad, though, to think of all the good lives thrown away for nothing.

Yet the theory that the Turk had lost his fighting quality, discredited at Gallipoli, seemed to be affecting the operations for the defence of the Suez Canal up to the spring of 1916. Our attack on the Dardanelles could have been successful only if the Turks were unable to hold ideal defence positions under conditions which gave them facilities for unlimited reinforcement and undisturbed supply and which imposed on the attack the impossibility of deploying a strength of troops sufficient for an effective assault, and also imposed truly desperate conditions of supply. Our early method of defence of the Suez Canal—"the jugular vein" of the body of the British Empire—could only have been successful if the Turks were incapable of an enterprising attack even after they had been heartened by a successful campaign at Gallipoli and were being urged on by splendidly mendacious promises from their German allies.

If the Suez Canal had been cut it would have been a staggering blow—perhaps a mortal blow—to the British

Empire. In the winter of 1915 it was very nearly cut. The Turks, by a military feat which stands high in the records of the war, brought troops through the Sinai Desert to the very banks of the canal, and actually launched pontoons and planted mines there. The attack was driven back before it could succeed in destroying the canal, but it brought the Allied cause to the very edge of serious disaster.

It was not thought that the Turk could bring heavy guns across the desert. They adopted an ingenious plan for securing a sufficiently stable track. Practically all the way from El Arish to Qatia they constructed an artillery road by cutting two trenches, each a foot deep and about eighteen inches wide, which they filled with the brushwood and tough scrub which is found all over the desert, and covered the whole with a layer of sand. When the sand was exceptionally soft wide planks were used instead of brushwood, and a battalion of labourers were employed in carrying the timber from the rear of the batteries to the front of them until the soil became firmer and the scrub tracks could be resumed. Later the British, following the same idea, constructed a wire-netting road across the desert, along which infantry and light cars could move, but not mounted troops nor heavy artillery.

Fortunately the gravity of this crisis aroused the authorities to a more real appreciation of the formidable nature of the threat which the Turks could bring against us. The idea of defending such a vital, and such an easily vulnerable, artery as the Suez Canal from its banks was very considerably modified. By the time that the R.G.H. were ready to take an active part in this field of war the decision had been come to that the defence of the Suez Canal would be best conducted on the other side of the Sinai Desert, though it was not until Gen. Lord Allenby was given command in June, 1917, and with command the proper means to undertake a vigorous offensive, that the situation could be completely reversed

and the German-Turkish dream of driving the British from the Middle East shattered.

Unaware of the final great triumph in which they were to take part in 1917-18, the R.G.H. might at the end of the second year of the Great War have been a little down-cast, more familiar as they were with the vexations, the hardships, the losses, than the glories of war. Their first term of service in defence of the British coast had been tedious to a body of men trained in the cavalry tradition, which aspires to an enemy's country as the one proper field of operation. Its value they could not know, for few were allowed to understand how actually imminent at one time was the invasion of our home country—that the plans at one time were drawn up by the home defence authorities for the complete devastation of a great coastal area so as to deny its resources to the enemy when they landed. The fine audacity of the despatch of the Regular Army to France had comforted our own people as well as deceived the enemy in regard to the measure of actual security which English territory had in 1914-15. The yeomanry forces might very easily have had the experience of desperate fighting on their home fields; but their home service had seemed useless, and certainly was tedious. Then, when service overseas fell to the lot of the R.G.H. it was at the fag-end of the Gallipoli Expedition, when they had the opportunity of showing the mettle of their courage serving as infantry, but no other opportunity, for at the time they were landed the doom of the adventure was already sealed.

Now brighter days were in store; not less arduous nor less exacting in toll of blood, but with real cavalry work to do, and with the joy and confidence that comes of pushing on almost constantly into an enemy's country.

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During December, 1915, the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were in camp at Mena, under the Pyramids near Cairo. Their welcome task was to equip again as a

mounted force. The regiment was very short of its full strength, and the carrying out of stable duties and the care and exercise of the horses, which had been brought up from Alexandria, and the fitting of saddlery and other equipment, heavily taxed the resources of the man power available. The men who had come back from Gallipoli were as a rule suffering in health from the hardships of the campaign there, but the glorious winter climate of Egypt soon had a good effect on them. Drafts of recruits began to arrive. Christmas Day was spent cheerfully with the regiment coming into shape again. Wooden huts had been erected for the men, and were first utilised for their dinner on Christmas Day, and very welcome they were, providing shelter from the glare and heat of the sun.

On December 7 the effective strength was 15 officers, 243 O.R.'s, and 437 horses. On December 8 Lieut. A. H. S. Howard, with a draft of 53 O.R.'s, joined from England, and Lieut. Lord Elcho rejoined from Mudros. On December 9 Major H. F. Clifford and 45 O.R.'s rejoined from the 5th Composite Regiment at Mex. On December 11 2nd Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert and 8 O.R.'s of the Machine Gun Section rejoined from Suvla. They had experienced the terrible blizzard of November on the Gallipoli Peninsula, which the rest of the regiment had happily escaped by earlier evacuation.

Early in January, 1916, the regiment moved by train to Salhia and camped on the desert about half a mile from the station. The strength was then : officers 17, O.R.'s 316, horses 354. The nominal roll of officers on leaving Mena Camp was :

Lieut.-Col. H. C. Elwes	Mena Camp
Major A. J. Palmer	" "
Major H. F. Clifford	" "
Major and Q.M. S. W. Adderley	" "
Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker	" "
Capt. C. J. Ratcliff	" "

Lieut. Lord Elcho	Mena Camp
Lieut. A. H. S. Howard	" "
Lieut. Viscount Quenington	" "
Lieut. M. A. Sands	" "
2nd Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave	" "
2nd Lieut. A. W. Strickland	" "
2nd Lieut. A. E. W. Guise	" "
2nd Lieut. Hon. E. J. B. Herbert	" "
2nd Lieut. C. C. Herbert	" "
2nd Lieut. G. de Freville	" "
2nd Lieut. R. B. Prettejohn	" "
2nd Lieut. F. A. C. Needham	Hospital
Capt. and Adj. J. Godman	On Sick Leave
2nd Lieut. J. C. Bengough	H.Q., 2nd Mtd. Div.
Lieut. A. C. Duncan (A.V.C.) attd.	2nd Comp. Regt., Mex.
Major (temp. Lieut.-Col.) R. M. Yorke	3rd Comp. Regt., Salonika
Capt. (temp. Major) C. E. Turner	3rd Comp. Regt., Salonika
2nd Lieut. R. G. Anderson	M. Gun course, Zeitoun
Capt. G. N. Horlick	Brigade M. Gun Officer
Major (temp. Lieut.-Col.) R. C. Forster	Commandant, Sidi Bishr

On January 10, 1916, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Archibald Murray, K.C.B., took over the command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. Later he took direct command in Egypt, and at once set on foot a progressive policy. A railway and a fresh-water pipe line were begun out into the desert, and the cavalry were pushed forward on raids and reconnaissances. But Gen. Sir Archibald Murray was not equipped with adequate resources to meet an enemy who had been greatly heartened by past successes and who were well established on the oases

between Palestine and the Suez Canal. Especially was he weak in Air Force.

It is necessary to record this in justice to a General who made good progress with scanty resources up to June, 1917. It is necessary also as an explanation of such incidents as that which will be chronicled later of April 23.

The Arab tribes in the vicinity of Salhia were friendly and sociable, and the chief of the Hanadi Tribe, Mahomed Sarudi Tahowi, was prompt in calling to pay his respects to the regiment. On January 13 the C.O. (Lieut.-Col Elwes), Major Palmer, Major Clifford, and Lieut. Viscount Quenington, accompanied by an escort of eight men and the Tmpt.-Major, and with Mahomed Said (Mess Caterer) as interpreter, returned the call. The arrival of the party at the chief's village, about eight miles to the north of Salhia station, was announced by the Tmpt.-Major blowing the regimental and cook-house calls. The sheik received his visitors most cordially, and introduced them to a large number of his male relatives who were present. He had a splendid collection of hawks, which were paraded with their attendants, and at a later date several of the regiment were invited to take part in a hawking expedition on the Salhia Desert near their camp. An inspection was also made of his Arab stud horses, mares, and greyhounds, and a huge Shamiana tent used on state occasions and now filled with innumerable carpets and tapestry made by the women of his tribe.

The chief entertained the party to tea, served in several small china tea-pots, and home-baked bread, or its equivalent, desert honey, and milk. When leaving the party was escorted on its way by one of the sheik's relatives mounted on a splendid Arab equipped with full trappings of state.

On January 15 Major-Gen. W. E. Peyton assumed command of the force in Egypt. The 2nd Mounted Division now ceased to exist. The Berks and Bucks Brigade was attached to the Western Frontier Force. The Notts. and Derby Brigade was ordered to Salonika. The London

Brigade was moved to Abbassia. The 1st S.M. Brigade was attached to the 15th Army Corps, whose headquarters were at Port Said.

At the end of January the strength of the regiment at Salhia was 20 officers, 350 O.R.'s, 397 horses, and 36 mules. Very useful training had been done during the stay at Salhia, especially in cavalry patrol duties, and the O.C. (Lieut.-Col. Elwes) was highly complimented on the high state of efficiency to which he had brought the regiment since its reorganisation and refitting after Gallipoli.

On February 3 2nd Lieut. Lord Apsley arrived from England with a draft of 10 O.R.'s. The month of February was spent in squadron, regimental, and brigade drill and a short course of musketry.

The regiment this month suffered the loss of 2nd Lieut. J. C. Bengough, who was killed in fighting against the Senussi. The following letter tells of his gallant end :

FROM LIEUT.-COL. SOUTER TO GEN. PEYTON.

Unjeila.

I cannot tell you how much I feel poor Bengough's death. He never left me for a moment from the time he joined, and was simply invaluable. I look upon him as one of the best fellows I ever met in my life. On the day nothing could exceed his helpfulness. Regardless of all fear, he brought up squadrons for me, carried messages, and did everything. As we galloped to the charge he said, "Isn't this splendid," and I said, "Yes, I have waited 24 years for this," and he replied, "I always was a lucky fellow." He was a fellow entirely after my heart, and I have the warmest affection and admiration for him. He must have gone on for nearly a mile in the pursuit, and was seen by one of our men fighting three Senussi. He ran two men completely through and killed them, when the third shot his horse and then shot him on the ground.

To this Major-Gen. Peyton added a footnote :

His regiment should know that I lent Bengough to Souter for the operations, as I knew, if things came off as I hoped, Souter would want a stout-hearted man, with a strong arm, behind him. I feel I sent the gallant lad to his death. I deeply regret it, but glory in the manner of it.

On March 9 the regiment marched to Kantara. Here Major (temp. Lieut.-Col.) R. M. Yorke and Capt. (temp. Major) C. E. Turner rejoined from Salonika. On March 22 Lieut.-Col. Elwes proceeded to England, and later commanded a battalion in France, and Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke assumed command of the regiment.

On March 24 the camp of the regiment was inspected by the C-in-C., Gen. Sir Archibald Murray, and the Prince of Wales.

The regiment was for the latter part of March on constant patrol duty. On March 26 Lieut.-Col. Yorke and Major Clifford carried out a reconnaissance with two troops to Oghratina and back by Qatia and Romani without seeing any signs of the enemy. At the close of the month the regiment was assembled at Romani for an extended reconnaissance to Bir-el-Abd, about 22 miles East.

On the morning of April 1 an Intelligence report brought news of the presence at Bir-el-Abd of a Turkish force of about 300 Regulars with 200 Arab auxiliaries and four guns. The R.G.H. less one squadron and the Worcester Yeomanry less one troop were ordered to march, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Yorke, to Qatia—a distance of six miles—in the evening and bivouac there for the night. The reconnaissance force consisted of 19 officers, 257 O.R's, 294 horses and mules and native details (Bikanir Camel Corps, with ambulance and ammunition camels).

On April 2 the force left Qatia and marched on towards Bir-el-Abd. The camels were left at the Hod¹ Negiliat with two squadrons Worcesters and a detachment of Field Ambulance. All baggage that could be spared had been left at Qatia, and as the force moved forward the men carried two iron rations and the horses one feed. An outpost of the enemy was first seen at Khirba, but

¹A "Hod" is a grove of date palms. Brackish water can generally be found below the surface of the ground at a depth of about 10 feet. This water is usually good enough for horses but not good for human beings. Sometimes it is too salt for horses.

they did not wait to engage, and by ten o'clock Bir-el-Abd was occupied without opposition. Some stores were found and a good well. A few Arabs who were at the oasis reported that the Turkish troops had fled some two hours before the arrival of our force. Military stores that were found were destroyed, and our column moved back to Romani via Qatia. There had been no casualties among the men ; one horse fell out with staggers, but was subsequently brought in. The force had covered 50 miles in 24 hours through heavy sand country. It was a good beginning, and it earned the recognition of the following letter from Brig.-Gen. Macmullen, 15th Army Corps :

Headquarters, 52nd Division, 1st Mtd. Bde.

The Commander-in-Chief has expressed his pleasure at the activity in reconnaissance recently displayed in the Qatia area and desires that his appreciation shall be conveyed to the troops.

The Corps Commander has much satisfaction in communicating the above to the G.O.C. 52nd Division, the Gloucestershire Hussars, Worcestershire Hussars, Bikanir Camel Corps, and all who have taken part in the successful little enterprise lately carried out. He recognises the thoroughness and keenness of all ranks and the excellence of the arrangements made.

(Sgd.) C. N. MACMULLEN, Brig.-Gen.,
Gen. Staff, 15th Army Corps.

On April 3 Brig.-Gen. Wiggin arrived at Romani and assumed command of the troops.

Reconnaissances from Romani continued. A Worcester squadron went out to Bir-el-Abd on April 9 and found an enemy force just arriving there. The squadron returned without casualties after killing two of the enemy. A German aeroplane visited Romani and Qatia on April 19, dropping two bombs on the latter camp. On April 21 an outpost of our position at Romani was attacked before dawn by an enemy patrol which withdrew on our opening fire. There were no casualties.

On April 23 the regiment suffered severely in a successful attack by the enemy on Qatia and Oghratina. The

position on April 22 was that a party of R.E.'s had been sent by the 52nd Division to Oghratina to dig wells. Two squadrons of the Worcester Yeomanry were sent to cover them, and "A" Squadron R.G.H., with one Machine Gun Sub-Section, under Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker was ordered to Qatia to take charge of the camp. On his taking over there he was left with about 40 Worcester Yeomanry details, mostly dismounted, and detachments of the R.A.M.C. and the Mobile Veterinary Column. Under Capt. Lloyd-Baker were the following officers: Lieut. Lord Elcho (2nd in Command), Lieut. A. W. Strickland, 2nd Lieut. C. C. Herbert, and 2nd Lieut. W. A. Smith. Other ranks of the R.G.H. numbered 101.

On April 23 a patrol was sent out about 4 a.m. and returned at 5 a.m. Shortly after an enemy patrol attacked our outpost line and then retired. About the same time an attack was made by the enemy on Oghratina and repulsed. At 6.30 a.m. Oghratina was again attacked, and at 7 it reported that it was "heavily attacked on all sides." Communication was then lost with this camp, which was evidently captured about 7.30 a.m. A dense fog enveloped the country up to about 9 a.m. At 7.45 a patrol was sent out from Qatia towards Oghratina, and about 1½ miles from Qatia encountered the enemy advancing in force. An hour afterwards the enemy opened fire with a field battery of four guns, assisted by an aeroplane "spotter." The fire was first directed on to the spot which had been occupied by the horses of the Worcester Squadron. Captain Lloyd-Baker had selected other lines for his horses, and the Turkish gunners were soon given this information, possibly by a "peaceful" agriculturist up a tree. In any case, they switched the fire on to the R.G.H. horses with great accuracy, thereby destroying them in a very short space of time.

The enemy's infantry attack then developed. Evidently he was in strong force, but the R.G.H. "A" Squadron was cheered by the news that "B" and "D" Squadrons were moving out from Romani to come to their support

on the left, and by the arrival of Col. Coventry with one squadron of Worcesters, which came out from Bir-el-Hamisah and went into action on the left. The enemy fell back on this flank, and for a brief time it seemed that the position might be retrieved.

Shortly after noon, however, the enemy opened fire with his artillery again, and at 2 p.m. shelled the camp heavily, setting the hospital tent on fire and causing severe casualties in the firing line. An infantry attack followed. The R.G.H. kept their position gallantly until about 3 p.m., when the camp was rushed. Only nine of the R.G.H. succeeded in getting away. Neither of the relief forces could save the situation. The two squadrons of R.G.H. that had moved out from Romani engaged the enemy heavily, and after suffering severely and losing, among others, Lieut. and Adj. Lord Quenington, had to fall back on Romani. At Romani the O.C. tried to ascertain if there were any hope of infantry reinforcements moving out to his assistance, and, not getting any assurance of help, decided to fall back to rail-head.

The casualties suffered were :

OFFICERS

Killed :

Lieut. and Adj. Viscount Quenington, M. H.
2nd Lieut. W. A. Smith.
Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker.
Lieut. Lord Elcho, H. F.

Prisoners of War :

Lieut. A. W. Strickland.
2nd Lieut. C. C. Herbert.

OTHER RANKS

Killed :

Sergt. Peacy, H. G.	Pte. Green, W.
Sergt. Shute, W. S.	Pte. Harvey, J.
Sergt. Walker, W. J.	Pte. Parsons, W. T.
Corpl. Emerson, W. E.	Tmpr. Mills, C.
Lce.-Corpl. Hatch, W. K.	Pte. Pulham, E. H.
Lce.-Corpl. Jones, E. O.	Pte. Simpson, E. H.
Pte. Davis, A. E.	Pte. Townsend, D.
Pte. Downham, P. J.	Pte. Stanley, L.

Wounded :

Sergt. Lovell, C. H.	Pte. Rowe, P.
Sergt. Harding, W. E.	Pte. Cox, B.
Sergt. Smart, T. H.	Pte. Kendall, W.
Sergt. Warner, E. E.	Pte. Allen, A. W.
Lce.-Corpl. Boulton, W. J.	Pte. Holborrow, E. H.
Pte. Hatch, A.	Pte. Groves, E.
Pte. Scorgie, O.	Pte. Shane, M.
Pte. Price, S.	

Wounded and Prisoners of War :

S.Q.M.S. Cross, J.	Corpl. Brain, J. E. B.
Sergt. Colborn, H. A.	Lce.-Corpl. Walwin, H.
Corpl. Springfield, T. O.	Pte. Plaister, E.
Sadd.-Corpl. Wicks, W.	Pte. Mourby, A. J.
Corpl. James, G. T.	Pte. Neale, F.

Prisoners of War :

S.S.M. Hyatt, G.	Pte. May, F. E.
Sergt. Millard, P. E.	Pte. Farmer, W. D.
Farr.-Cpl. Woodcock, B.	Pte. Merry, H.
Lce.-Corpl. Taylor, S. P.	Pte. Tippet, E. J.
Tmpr. Lewis, F.	Pte. Bowl, F. E.
Pte. Smith, R. C.	Pte. Clifford, C. C.
Pte. Evans, J. H.	Pte. Farmer, W.
Pte. Rufell, H.	Pte. Greenwood, E.
Pte. Cutts, E. A.	Pte. Hopkins, F. A.
Pte. Dilloway, F.	Pte. Johnstone, C. W.
Pte. Gill, F. W.	Pte. Lloyd, L. L. S.
Pte. Hodges, C. B.	Pte. Nemes, W. T.
Pte. Hawkes, H. E.	Pte. Pardington, R.
Pte. Lippett, J.	Pte. Preen, E. V.
Pte. Lord, E. D.	Pte. Rogers, H. R.
Pte. Oliver, O.	Pte. Smith, A. J.
Pte. Perkins, F.	Pte. Troughton, A. G.
Pte. Rich, A. W.	Pte. Kendall, J. H.
Pte. Smith, H. R.	Pte. Boswell, A. J.
Pte. Slatton, A. J.	Pte. Percy, E.
Pte. White, W. H.	Pte. Adcock, J. P.
Pte. Westcott, J. E.	Pte. Leighton, T. F.
Pte. Silvey, S. V.	Pte. Marsh, T. H.
Pte. Mann, W.	Pte. Sargent, W. C.
Pte. Lewis, J. P.	Pte. Louis, S. C.
Pte. Lilbey, G. S.	

Subsequently Military Medals for gallantry in this action were awarded to : S.Q.M.S. J. Cross, Sergt. H. A. Colborn, Lce.-Corpl. A. C. Wheeler, Lce.-Corpl. G. Castle, Pte. G. P. Pike.

The next day the regiment was relieved by the Australian Light Horse Brigade and moved back to Kantara.

Lord Quenington's body was taken to Cairo for burial. His wife had died there a few days before, and it was decided to make exception in his case, and, instead of burying him on the battlefield, to lay him to rest by the side of his wife. A few officers were granted leave to attend the funeral. The bearer party consisted of S.S.M. Godwin, Sergts. Handy, Boddington, Lce.-Sergt. Price, Corpl. Lewis, Ptes. Puffett, Rickards, Tmpt.-Major Davis.

On April 26 the regiment moved to Ballah. Its strength was now 18 officers, 314 O.R.'s.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF ROMANI (MAY TO AUGUST, 1916)

THE months of May, June, and July, 1916, were uneventful. On May 12 the regiment moved from Ballah to Hill 70, taking over that camp from the Anzac Mounted Division. It was not a comfortable camp, being very foul and plagued with flies. The weather was hot and the patrol work exacting. On May 18 the regiment moved back to Ballah. The strength at this date was 15 officers, 218 O.R.'s, 249 horses, and 29 mules. On May 31 Major A. J. Palmer took command of the regiment temporarily, Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke taking over temporary command of the 5th Mounted Brigade. The regiment moved to El Ferdan, and as there was an idea of its remaining there for some time arrangements were made for providing wooden huts for the men and shelters for the horses from the hot sun. The huts, if erected, were never used by the regiment, as they were ordered back to Kantara on June 5.

Small drafts arrived at various dates, and when the regiment moved to Kantara on June 5 the strength was 16 officers, 327 O.R.'s., 274 horses, and 28 mules.

"Sand colic" (a severe stomach trouble caused by the desert sand getting into the food) was rife among the men in the regiment this month. It was also a serious trouble with the horses. In spite of the precaution of muzzling them the horses got sand into their stomachs, causing severe intestinal irritation. Inoculation against paratyphoid fever was carried out. The heat in June was excessive, reaching sometimes to 110° in the shade.

On July 9 Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke resumed command of the regiment.

A batch of 85 remounts arrived on July 12, and on July 19 a draft of 3 officers (Lieut. E. T. Cripps, 2nd Lieuts. L. Wilkins and W. G. A. Woodcock) and 69 O.R.'s.

On July 20 a composite regiment was formed under the command of Lieut.-Col. Yorke, consisting of "B" and "D" Squadrons R.G.H. and one squadron Worcester Yeomanry, with Major Palmer and Major and Q.M. S. W. Adderley and the Adjutant, Capt. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave. Lieut. G. N. Horlick remained at Kantara re-forming "A" Squadron. "D" Squadron R.G.H. was then attached at Pelusium to the 42nd Division. The R.G.H. squadron, forming part of the composite regiment, consisted of Lieuts. Mitchell, Lord Apsley, Cripps, and Anderson, 2nd Lieut. Byard, and 103 O.R.'s, a Machine Gun section under Lieut. Herbert with 23 O.R.'s, 147 riding horses, and 16 mules. This regiment moved to Hill 70. An attack by the Turks on our positions in front of the Suez Canal had been hatching. It was the enemy's last effort against the canal, and the Battle of Romani, which settled its fate, marked the beginning of the end of the Turkish Empire's part in the Great War.

The enemy formed his plans for this attack after the success of his outpost actions in April. With German and Austrian help—the Germans providing machine gunners, aeroplanes, and advice, the Austrians contributing heavy artillery—the Turk had great hopes from the movement, and cherished a confidence that the plans and preparations for it could be kept secret. As a matter of fact his every step was promptly made known to our Intelligence, whilst he was left in a state of mystification up to the very last moment as to what forces we had disposed in front of the canal. This was largely due to the good reconnaissance and patrol work of our cavalry, which did its duty well as the "eyes of the force."

In the earlier stages of the Egyptian operations the mistake had been made of relying too absolutely on aerial reconnaissance, and this over-reliance had been



LT.-COL. H. C. ELWES, M.V.O., D.S.O.

one of the causes of the Turkish success in 1915 in getting to the banks of the canal. Now the aeroplane, wonderful aid though it is to military operations, cannot wholly supplant cavalry in reconnaissance work. In this Sinai country aeroplane observation, however faithful, could not easily follow the movements of troops which hid in the palm-hods by day and marched by night, nor could it get reliable information as to the strength of bodies which were detected. The cavalry patrols could and did. From April onwards they were constantly hanging on to the outskirts of the Turkish forces and acquiring accurate knowledge of his dispositions. Their gleanings, added to the gleanings of the Air Service, and such information as came in from spies, made our Intelligence aware almost exactly of the intentions and the strength of the enemy. The British Intelligence appreciation of the position on the eve of the enemy's attack on Romani was wonderfully precise.

Looking back on the history of the Great War one cannot keep from a feeling of wonder at the strange persistence of the belief that the British Army is a very brave, but also a very stupid, organisation; sturdy in the battle-line, but almost invariably at fault in matters of intelligence and strategy. The source of the belief is easy to be traced. It is an article of political faith of a large section of British public men to preach jealousy and distrust of the military forces of the Crown—a relic this, probably, of the days when the Army might be used by a despotic monarch as a means of oppression. This jealousy is preached sedulously from the platform and in a great part of the Press, and it seems to be found a necessary part of the preaching to insist that the British officer is a fool. Even people who are not of the school of soldier-haters are prone to accept this preaching as having a basis of fact. In consequence no political party in Great Britain ever in time of peace gives fair play to the Army. On the outbreak of every war the Army has to go to battle, not under the conditions which

it would have prepared, but under conditions which the politicians have laid down, acting on the assumption that the soldier is the last person to be trusted in the military science.

Who now among "the leaders of the people" ever calls the attention of the British public to the fact that throughout the Great War the British Army was so wisely led, as well as so naturally loyal, that it was the only European Army which never showed a sign of mutiny and discontent; that the decision for the autumn, 1918, campaign which led to the "crowning mercy" in Flanders was a British decision to which our great Ally had to be persuaded; that the Allenby campaign in Palestine was, for daring of conception and stern perfection of execution, equal to any of the classic efforts of Napoleon?

This digression will be pardoned. It is suggested by the fact that in the Battle of Romani the British Command met fully the test of good generalship, which is to know what the other side are up to, and that the German-Turkish-Austrian command was signally inferior in this respect. Without our superiority in command even the good quality of the British Army might not have won the victory under conditions which made the most savage demands on the endurance of troops accustomed to cold weather conditions.

The enemy began moving up his troops for the attack on the Suez Canal in May, and throughout June and July was pushing them steadily forward. By August he had about 18,000 men on the fighting line Oghratina-Mageibra. He had no cavalry (which put him at a serious disadvantage in scouting), but two companies of camelry. He had four heavy batteries (Austrian and German), three batteries of mountain guns, a group of anti-aircraft guns, eight machine gun companies (German), about 18 aeroplanes, and about 12,000 infantry—the 3rd infantry Division. The Turkish idea in August was to await further reinforcements in October, which would have nearly doubled his striking force. The German staff

insisted on the attack in August, influenced by ignorance both of our positions and of the strength of our defending force.

It will be convenient to give a brief account of the battle before detailing the part that the R.G.H. took in its issue. Late on the night of August 3 the enemy's advance guard began to attack. At dawn our positions were heavily shelled. The evident intention of the enemy was to push in our right flank, isolate and reduce Romani, and then push on to Kantara. Our left flank was in touch with the Mediterranean coast, and naval forces could assist there with their batteries. From left to right our troops were disposed :

The 42nd (East Lancs.) Division was holding the line from Mahemdia, on the sea coast, to Romani with a brigade at Hill 70 and at Pelusium (in the rear of that section of the line). A brigade of the 53rd (Welsh) Division was north of Romani, and the 52nd (Lowland) Division was in the line at Romani and south to the southern slope of Gannit Hill. Our heavy artillery was at Romani, and with them some field batteries. The R.H.A. batteries were attached to the Mounted Division, which was disposed generally on our right from Bir Abu Diuk to Bir Abu Raml and had to meet the enemy's flank attack there and to strive to roll him up towards the sea and threaten his rear.

The enemy developed his attack with courage and resolution. It became the duty of our mounted forces to hold him as far as possible by delaying actions whilst our infantry reserves were brought up. The enemy during the morning won to Mount Meredith and to Wellington Ridge and Mount Royston, and from there commanded the Mounted Division's camps. After noon the tide of battle changed. Our reserves had come up and the Turkish effort had spent its force. By nightfall most of the high ground which the Turkish advance had carried was recaptured and the Turks were falling back all along the line, and large batches of prisoners began

to come in. Pursuit was impossible that night. A great part of the day's defensive fighting had fallen on the mounted forces, and they were not in a state to undertake a prompt chase. Both men and horses were suffering severely from lack of water.

At daybreak, August 5, the pursuit was taken up. The enemy was hustled off a portion of Wellington Ridge, still in his hands, and was pushed towards Qatia, fighting stubborn rearguard actions. On August 6 the enemy fell back further, still fighting and taking his heavy guns with him, and our infantry moved forward and took up the line Bir-el-Mamluk—Er Rabah. The weather was very hot and a further movement forward of the infantry was impossible. The mounted forces kept up pressure on the retiring enemy, making every effort to encircle his flanks, but were frustrated in this by his artillery. On August 9 at Bir-el-Abd the enemy reacted with determined counter-attacks on our mounted forces, which had to break off the action. On August 12 it was found that the enemy had retired from Bir-el-Abd towards El Arish, and the pursuit ceased.

To return to the early stages of the battle and the part played by the R.G.H. When the action opened two squadrons of the R.G.H. were at Hill 70 with the composite regiment commanded by Lieut.-Col. Yorke, and one squadron was at Pelusium. On the morning of August 4 Lieut.-Col. Yorke with the composite regiment, was ordered to a position south-west of Royston Hill to support the 1st and 2nd Light Horse Brigades. It was then ordered to proceed to Dulidar and take up an outpost there. The enemy was pressing forward with great resolution, and it appeared as if he would cut through at this point, capture the water-pipe which had been laid from Kantara, and take the railway line to Romani in the rear. It became apparent that there was a dangerous gap in our line, and, acting on his own initiative, Major Turner, commanding the R.G.H. squadron at Pelusium, marched his force into this gap. It was an

instance of quick appreciation of a position and of courageous acceptance of a responsibility which in the subsequent judgment of others had a great deal to do with the success of the day.

For three hours Major Turner's "D" Squadron held the gap. About 11 he was in touch with Lieut.-Col. Yorke on his right. The enemy was at this moment at his highest point of success. He had worked his way to Royston Hill, and part of his forces—about two battalions—were wedged between the composite regiment and Major Turner's squadron. The enemy was attacked by them on both his flanks and forced to retire a little. Shortly before noon the N.Z.M.R. came up north of Royston Hill and took over Major Turner's position, and he joined the force of Lieut.-Col. Yorke. Lieut.-Col. Yorke, with the co-operation of Major Turner, had been able to squeeze back a very dangerous thrust by the enemy. But the enemy still kept up a fierce effort towards the north, and Lieut.-Col. Yorke at noon reported to Brigade H.Q. that there were two battalions of Turks engaged with him. The Warwickshire Yeomanry were ordered to his help, but they did not arrive until 2.30, and by that time the enemy's effort was slackening and he was being pushed slowly back by the combined pressure of the composite regiment and of the N.Z.M.R.

Shortly after there happened one of the stirring episodes of the battle—the capture by the R.G.H. of an enemy battery in action. The official report on this incident by Brig.-Gen. Wiggin, O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade, states :

I went up to the Front, arriving at 4 p.m., and learnt the situation from Col. Yorke. The Brigade Major of the N.Z.M.R. Brigade came up shortly afterwards and asked if we would be ready to co-operate in a vigorous counter attack at 5. I replied in the affirmative. Directly we began to put on the pressure the Turks in the valley below put up the white flag and came running in with their hands up. There was a big ridge in front, the southern spur of Hill Royston, on which the enemy had machine guns, which we afterwards took. With the N.Z.'s on his left Col.

Yorke led two squadrons at this ridge and took it at the gallop. At the same time I ordered the Warwicks to swing forward their right round the end of the spur and attack the enemy's left rear.

When Col. Yorke's two squadrons arrived on the ridge they saw below them large numbers of the enemy and four camel guns in emplacements 400 yds. in their immediate front. One of his squadron leaders, Lieut. Mitchell, gave orders to concentrate five rounds rapid at each gun in succession, and so knocked out one gun after another by killing or wounding all the gun detachments. I state emphatically that no one took any part in knocking out these guns beyond Lieut. Mitchell's squadron of the R.G.H. Many Turks then ran forward towards the ridge with white flags and were told to come up. The total prisoners at this point was 450 and the total for the day 500. On the right the Warwicks had been checked by the fire of well-posted machine guns. I went down to them myself and pushed two squadrons on round the spur held by the composite regiment. The enemy then rallied a firing-line of about 200 men and took up a strong position on a ridge above a hod. This move held up these two squadrons, and, seeing they were unable to make headway, I withdrew them to the ridge. It was then too late to make another thrust.

As there was at the time some tendency to dispute the credit for this achievement, the report of Lieut.-Col. Yorke may be also quoted :

At about 5.45 p.m. on the 4th inst., " B " Squadron R.G.H., under command of Lieut. F. A. Mitchell, and two troops of Worcester Yeomanry, under command of Major Wiggin, took possession of the highest point of Mount Royston immediately north-west of a hod unnamed on the map and immediately west of a small clump of palm trees about 400 yds. distant. The four guns were immediately east of this ridge, estimated range about 500 yds. The elevation used on the rifles of Lieut. Mitchell's squadron R.G.H. (owing to firing downhill at a steep angle), was 400 yds. The guns were in four emplacements. Immediately on our taking possession of the ridge the guns (which had been facing north) were swung round and fired directly on my men lining the ridge. These guns had certainly not been placed out of action, as I personally saw every one of them fire in turn, the shells in each case just going over the top of the ridge where we were lying, or bursting on impact in the sand close to the top of the ridge. At least 25 shells were fired. One of these shells bursting caused Lieut. Lord Apsley to be completely

buried in sand, and he had to be dug out. On another one bursting Major Wiggin, commanding Worcestershire Squadron, owing to sand collapsing under him, went head over heels down the hill, fortunately on the right side. There were several narrow escapes, but owing to the angle of elevation the shells were practically bound to go over the top of the hill or strike the sand, by which the explosion was damped, and in consequence did no harm. The guns must have been firing at an angle of at least 27 degrees.

About 6 p.m. the guns ceased firing and the survivors hoisted a flag and came running in towards us.

The troops prolonging the left of my position (owing to the configuration of the ground, which turned back, they were to my half-left rear) were composed of the 2nd Squadron Auckland Mounted Rifles. These were in touch with the two troops Worcester Yeomanry who were on the left of the R.G.H. Squadron.

The two troops Worcester Yeomanry were firing chiefly at the camels, as the enemy gunners, owing to the emplacements, had cover from them.

Lieut. Mitchell on the other hand, with his squadron, looked straight down into the emplacements. . . .

I fully recognise that if it had not been for the general co-operation of all units engaged my regiment would never have had the opportunity of putting these guns out of action, but at the same time I would point out that a duel at point-blank range took place between units of my regiment and this battery, the result being that owing to the fire control and coolness displayed by the officers and men engaged, the battery, after it had had several men and most of its camels hit, put up the white flag, and the survivors came in to my regiment and surrendered.

With the fall of night the battle ceased. Of the R.G.H. on that day Lieut. Lord Apsley was the latest in action. He had been ordered with a troop to collect prisoners, and in doing so came into touch with the enemy's rearguard and remained in action until dark, when he was recalled.

The composite regiment (which now included also "D" Squadron R.G.H.) moved back to Pelusium to water and to renew ammunition supplies. It had captured 500 prisoners, four camel guns, and two machine guns. It had suffered 13 casualties. One of the wounded, Pte. A. P. Handy, died the next day.

The good fortune of the war had placed the R.G.H. on this day at the crucial point of the battle. The initiative of Major Turner in filling up a dangerous gap, the effective squeeze by the composite regiment and the R.G.H. Squadron, which pushed the Turkish advance back on Royston Hill, the dashing charge which carried the hill, the engaging and capture of an enemy battery—all these made up a glorious day. No soldier could want a better.

On August 5 the 5th Mounted Brigade, including the R.G.H., took up the pursuit. The brigade was now placed under the orders of the Anzac Mounted Division and operated on the left of the Anzacs, and between them and the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, in an attack on the enemy's right.

In the morning some captures of prisoners were made, and a machine gun on a camel. In the afternoon the 5th Mounted Brigade co-operated on the left in an attack upon Qatia. The spectacle of the mounted brigades all converging on the Qatia area was one worth beholding from a cavalryman's point of view. It was the first time the R.G.H. had seen a mounted force of this size going into action. The troops had no idea that 10,000 Turks were carefully concealed in trenches bordering the belt of palm trees as there was not a sign of the enemy barring a few camels, with "fantassis"¹ shining in the sun, which could be observed retiring over a sand dune in the far distance.

The R.G.H. advanced in column of squadrons, each squadron in line of troop-columns, preceded by scouts. The leading troops arrived at about 800 yds. off the Turkish trenches when the enemy made his presence known by a heavy fire from camel guns, machine guns, and rifles. The enemy's position was found to be too strongly held for our forces available, and at 6.30 p.m. the action was broken off. Lieut. R. G. Anderson and four O.R.'s of the Gloucesters were wounded.

¹ Metal water tanks carried by camels.



BRIG.-GEN. R. M. YORKE, C.M.G., D.S.O.

The regiment marched to Romani and bivouacked there.

On August 6 it was announced that the enemy were making a stand at Qatia and were to be attacked by the infantry and the Anzac Mounted Division, with the 5th Mounted Brigade as reserve. On our advance the enemy retired to Oghratina and we moved into Qatia without opposition at 11.30 a.m. A reconnaissance in force by mounted troops to the north of Oghratina was ordered and Lieut.-Col. Yorke was put in command of this operation. It was successfully carried out, our troops coming under considerable shell fire. The regiment bivouacked for the night at Qatia.

On August 7 another reconnaissance in force was made, and again the regiment bivouacked for the night at Qatia.

On August 8 the enemy evacuated Oghratina and the regiment moved forward and bivouacked there that night, being in Divisional Reserve.

On August 9 the Anzac Mounted Division attacked the enemy at Bir-el-Abd. In the evening the two squadrons R.G.H. put out a line of outposts for the N.Z.M.R., but these were withdrawn later as all our mounted forces went back to Oghratina.

On August 15 the R.G.H. marched back to Hill 70.

The following extracts from the diary of the officer whom I have quoted before give a vivid picture of these strenuous days :

July 24.—Hill 70 in the composite cavalry regiment. Remounts given to us are unfit. Water is the chief difficulty. Sunday evening church parade. All itching to have a cut at the Turks. The desert is very difficult—covered with camel grass and little clumps. We marched by compass, as there are few landmarks. Horses are wild New Zealanders. We are on the track the Queen of Sheba used. Ants are a trouble—big black ones.

August 5.—Approaching Qatia. We hold the line of sand, fired at the whole time, and no target to shoot within range. A rotten morning and afternoon ; nothing to do and being shot

at the whole time. Then we had a chance to advance. Off to a flank to a high skyline. Got shrapnelled on the way. We got on to the ridge, which was like a razor back and which the Turks evacuated as we advanced. Down below us in the plain such a scene! Same old Jats with guns they used at Qatia, their camels and trenches. We gave them hell. About 500 surrendered and four guns to us. It was brilliant! The old yeomen played up like the men they are, and everyone, from the General downwards, is delighted. We took and marched them to camp. Quite the best fight I have been in, and Frank and I enjoyed it awfully. We got to a hod at 8.30. Awful job to water there. No food except iron rations for the men. Laid down at midnight; up at 3 and off again.

August 7.—Qatia. We are standing to waiting for orders. When we attacked this place, held strongly with guns, machine guns, etc., we got to it within 500 yds. It was a beastly position. We withdrew at dark. Got back to Romani that night. Awfully beat the next morning. Came back to this place, Qatia, where they had retired to, and half way there we heard they had evacuated. The New Zealand Brigade sent a man to Kantara yesterday and said the yeomen had cut them out this time. We are all very pleased with ourselves and feel we have wiped off old scores and got a name at last.

August 7.—Qatia. I am sitting in the shadow of my horse, underneath him. Do hope he won't step on me.¹ Squadron before me giving the horses a small feed. The strain is pretty heavy, working hard for 21 hours out of the 24, and men and horses are showing it. We have stopped any chance of the canal being reached now after our last three days' work.

August 8.—Oghratina. We are fairly on top. Men are at half rations with two gallons of water a man. *The afternoon.*—Fight when we cut the Turks and guns. We were on a high ridge—Royston's Ridge (named after an Australian Brigadier). The scene when the white flag went up was indescribable. There are practically no flies out in the desert and the climate is very good. Very hot in the day and cool at night and a breeze blowing.

August 10.—Oghratina. The retirement has started. The Australians had been badly hit. We went up and took an outpost line to cover up their retreat, but the Turks were too tired to come on. We heard a New Zealander say that they would sooner have a squadron of the yeomanry with them than a brigade of

¹To use the shade of your animal as shelter from the sun is a Bedouin habit. The Arabs have a picturesque story of an incident of the Prophet's life when he was sheltering under the shadow of his camel.

the Australians. We have quite a reputation. Our Anzac General is delighted with us, and says all kinds of nice things, and told Ralph we saved the situation at Romani. We found very interesting diaries on our prisoners, especially on the German officers. They seem to have a holy dread of our cavalry, which is very satisfactory.

The officers who took part in the operations August 4 to August 15 were: Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke, Major A. J. Palmer, Major C. E. Turner, Captain A. H. S. Howard, Capt. & Adj. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, Lieuts. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert, F. A. Mitchell, Lord Apsley, E. T. Cripps, and R. G. Anderson, 2nd Lieuts. F. A. C. Needham, L. L. Wilkins, A. C. Byard, and R. H. Wilson, and Capt. C. M. Forster (who joined as Medical Officer 10/8/16).

The O.R.'s of the R.G.H. who took part totalled 287. The casualties were Pte. A. P. Handy, died of wounds; Lieut. R. G. Anderson and seven O.R.'s wounded.

The following telegram from H.M. the King was received by the Commander-in-Chief at the close of the operations:

Please convey to all ranks engaged in the Battle of Romani my appreciation of their efforts which have brought about the brilliant success they have won at the height of the hot season in the desert country. Please circulate to all ranks.

The following is an extract from a congratulatory letter from Major-Gen. Sir H. G. Chauvel, commanding the Anzac Mounted Division, to Brig.-Gen. E. A. Wiggin, O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade:

I appreciate very much the honour of having your brigade included in my command and hope that you will express to all ranks my thanks for the excellent work they did whilst with the A. and N.Z. Division.

My thanks are specially due to the gallant way in which they co-operated with the N.Z.M.R. Brigade in the taking of Mount Royston on the 4th inst., and for the prompt assistance rendered at Bir-el-Abd on the 9th inst.

To his report on the operations of the 5th Mounted Brigade Brig.-Gen. E. A. Wiggin added :

I trust I may be allowed to allude to the exemplary manner in which all ranks performed their duties. In action the young soldiers of the latest drafts were as steady as the veterans of Gallipoli, than which no more can be said. . . . I cannot impress too strongly the work done by Major Turner's squadron on that officer's own initiative, which proved to be a great factor in the successful issue of the day.

CHAPTER XII

RAFA (AUGUST, 1916, TO FEBRUARY, 1917)

AFTER his defeat at Romani the enemy was never again in a position to threaten the Suez Canal. Henceforth he was to fight rearguard actions—sometimes, as at Gaza, being able to beat off our attack, but never able to resume the initiative. The long chase which was to end at Damascus and Aleppo had begun.

During September, October, November, and December the British force steadily pushed forward its railway and its water-pipe line into the Sinai Desert, and forward from rail-head its cavalry patrols were kept in constant touch with the enemy who had finally settled down at El Arish—Masaiid. The organisation needed for the subduing of the desert so that it might be a sound line of communication was immense and varied. Native levies—chiefly from Egypt—were raised to form huge Labour Corps. Camel transport was attached to all fighting units.

Towards the end of December we were in a position to strike at the enemy entrenched at El Arish, but he did not await an attack, and the position was taken without opposition on December 22.

The R.G.H. was occupied during this time chiefly on patrol work, with brief intervals of rest.

On August 17 at Hill 70 the regiment's horses were inspected by Lieut.-Gen. Lawrence, who complimented the regiment on their condition and on its achievements during the recent operations. 2nd Lieut. G. V. de Freville on this date joined the regiment with 16 O.R.'s and 30 horses from Kantara.

On August 18 the horses were inspected by Brig.-Gen.

Butler, D.V.S., who complimented the regiment on their condition. 2nd Lieut. A. C. Byard on this date joined the regiment with 7 O.R.'s from Kantara.

On August 19 Capt. Horlick, with 116 O.R.'s, arrived from Kantara. The strength of the regiment at the end of the month was 19 officers, 413 O.R.'s, 428 horses, and 43 mules. (These figures include 2nd Lieut. P. H. Morgan, 26 O.R.'s, and 30 horses detached at Ballybunion). The Signal Troop was reformed as a separate unit under 2nd Lieut. G. V. de Freville.

Regimental orders August 20 quoted from the *London Gazette* the following promotions, to take effect from the dates mentioned :

Lieut. Lord Elcho, Temp. Capt.	22/8/15
Lieut. A. H. S. Howard ,, ,,	22/8/15
Lieut. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, Temp. Capt.	24/4/16
2nd Lieut. Hon. E. J. B. Herbert, Temp. Lieut.	
2nd Lieut. F. A. Mitchell ,, ,,	12/11/15
2nd Lieut. Lord Apsley ,, ,,	24/4/16
2nd Lieut. E. T. Cripps ,, ,,	24/4/16
2nd Lieut. R. G. Anderson ,, ,,	24/4/16
2nd Lieut. A. W. Strickland ,, ,,	23/8/15

Temp. Capt. G. N. Horlick retained his temporary rank on ceasing to command a brigade Machine Gun Squadron and taking over command of a squadron of yeomanry *vice* Capt. M. G. Lloyd-Baker (killed) April 23, 1916.

Regimental orders, August 28, stated that : "The following are mentioned for distinguished and gallant services rendered during the period of Gen. Sir Charles Munro's command of the M.E.F. : Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke, Temp. Capt. G. N. Horlick, R.Q.M.S. Shenton, Sergt. G. P. Pike, Sergt. H. Philip, Corpl. D. R. Montgomery."

On September 1 and 9 at Hill 70 the regiment was engaged in rifle matches with the Ayrshire Yeomanry.

On September 9 it was announced that the King of



Serbia had granted decorations for distinguished service in the campaign to Major A. J. Palmer and Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert.

An outbreak of cholera was reported amongst the prisoners taken at Romani, but thanks to the prompt action taken, and isolation camps prepared by the Medical Officers, there was no spread of the disease. For the time all leave had been stopped, but on September 18 Lieut.-Col. Yorke and Major C. Turner went to England on leave and Major A. J. Palmer assumed command of the regiment. A very limited amount of leave was now available for all ranks. Some of those who could not be granted leave were allowed a week's holiday at Port Said Rest Camp.

Regimental orders on September 27 announced that the D.C.M. had been awarded to Sergt. C. F. Garrett and Sergt. H. G. Catley.

On September 28 the regiment moved on to Romani. The strength at this date was 15 officers, 307 O.R.'s, 344 horses, 32 mules, and 75 camels (this is exclusive of strength at Ballybunion and Shohat).

On September 29 the regiment moved on to Nabit. Tents were not allowed on account of the activities of hostile aeroplanes, and the men made themselves palm shelters. The regiment was stationed at Nabit for some time, doing desert patrol and reconnaissance work from that centre.

This was quite an attractive hod, and the dates were just ripe for consumption. The horses were on lines in the hod, and on a sloping sand dune facing it the officers built themselves huts made of palm leaves. The regimental mess was a great success, until one night, enjoying the best the regiment could get in this far-away spot, it rained heavily and the meal had to be finished outside. Palm leaves may give protection from sun but they are not recommended when it rains.

During this period each squadron in turn was sent to Gamal and Willegha for duty in outpost line, whilst the

regiment being on the right flank, similar duties became their rôle day and night.

Lieut. Hatton was attached to the regiment for three weeks, and all ranks were exercised in the latest methods of bayonet fighting, bomb detonating and throwing. A track was made with manure sufficiently hard for a horse to be able to gallop and instruction given in the use of the sword mounted. The study of the compass, map setting and reading—in fact, a thorough training in all duties of a cavalry soldier, both mounted and dismounted—also engaged attention.

Inasmuch as all ranks had only just as much as they were allowed to carry on themselves (that was very little owing to the heavy sand over which the horses had to plough their way) there was no possibility of cricket or football, but in spite of no canteens the spirit of the troops was wonderful.

On October 16 regimental orders announced that the following had been mentioned in despatches, May 31, 1916: Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke, Major H. F. Clifford, the late Lieut. Viscount Quenington, and S.S.M. C. C. Godwin. Capt. (Temp. Major) C. E. Turner had been granted the D.S.O. and 2nd Lieut. (Temp. Lieut.) F. A. Mitchell, the M.C.

On October 25 Capt. T. J. Longworth and Lieut. and Q.M. H. Jepson joined from England.

During November the regiment remained at Nabit, and patrol duties continued to be uneventful. On November 7 Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke and Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., returned from leave, and Lieut.-Col. Yorke resumed command.

On November 9 2nd Lieuts. E. H. Cook and E. G. Townsend joined.

On November 19 the regiment moved to a new camp near Hod Batar. During this period several officers of the regiment in turn attended a Cavalry Course at Helmieh, Egypt.

On November 25 the regiment moved to Khirba. The

marching-out strength was 18 officers, 349 O.R.'s, 413 horses, 35 mules, 74 camels, and 34 native auxiliaries.

On November 26 the regiment moved to Romani and the next day to Dueidar. At the close of the month the strength of the regiment was 23 officers, 319 O.R.'s, 456 horses, 38 mules, 62 camels, with 26 native auxiliaries.

On December 6 Col. Yorke was evacuated to hospital. He did not return to the regiment, being appointed Brig.-Gen. to command Western Coastal Defences in 1917.

On December 9 the regiment left Dueidar for Romani, Khirba, Bir-el-Abd, Salmana, Abu Tillul, Mazar, and Maadan.

On December 21 the regiment formed the advanced guard to the force marching to El Arish. Starting from Maadan at 2.30 a.m., very dark and rather cold, they arrived at Bittia at 5.45. The enemy were reported as having hastily retired, and the water supply for horses being of a doubtful quantity, the regiment had orders to return to Mallah, arriving there at 2.15 p.m. the next day. It was there Christmas Day was spent. An officer returning from the base managed to produce Egyptian turkeys, and, in spite of heavy rain all the afternoon, a pleasant day was spent. In the evening a most enjoyable concert took place.

At the close of December, 1916, the strength of the regiment in the field was 21 officers, 343 O.R.'s, 400 horses, 26 mules, 51 camels, with 23 native auxiliaries. At base were, in addition, 1 officer, 43 O.R.'s, 18 horses, and 11 mules. In hospital were 4 officers and 37 O.R.'s.

In January it was decided to make an attempt to clear the enemy out of a strong post which he held at Rafa. The place was distant 29 miles from our position ; it was held by over 2,000 Turkish troops, and it was the advance post of his main force based at and around Beersheba. It was not our idea to capture and hold Rafa but to raid the place, inflict as much damage as possible on the Turkish force, and then retire to our base at El Arish. It was necessary that we should advance a strong force

secretly across 29 miles of desert, reduce Rafa before the Turk could send reinforcements from his main body, and then get away at once.

The problem was a difficult one. It was whether a force of 5,000 men could surround and cut off the retreat of a force of about 2,000 and then carry an entrenched position held by this enemy with machine guns, mountain guns in well-placed modern entrenchments, backed up by a force of unknown strength within twelve miles. The attacking force had only field guns to support the attack, had to operate 29 miles from their base, and to fight after a night march. The place had to be taken "against time," and, if it did not fall, there was some doubt if the attacking force would extricate itself without grave loss.

The task was undertaken by Lieut.-Gen. Sir Philip Chetwode, commanding a force which had been recently formed and named the Desert Column. It was wholly a mounted force. His troops consisted of the 5th Mounted Brigade (in which were the R.G.H.), the Anzac Mounted Division (less the 2nd Light Horse Brigade), the Imperial Camel Corps, with a battery of the H.A.C.

Our force marched out on the night of January 8 and pushed on rapidly, so as to surround the Turkish position as far as possible before daylight. The attack opened shortly after 7 a.m. The Turkish position was found to be of great strength, dominated by a redoubt, with field guns and machine gun posts, and surrounded by open country which gave to his entrenchments a perfect *glacis*. After 10 hours' fighting the attack was completely successful. Practically the whole Turkish force was destroyed. The enemy lost in killed 252, and over 1,600 unwounded prisoners were taken, and a mountain battery and six machine guns. The British force lost 71 killed, 415 were wounded, and one reported missing.

Turkish reinforcements were coming on rapidly during the later stages of the battle and it was necessary for our attacking force to detach troops to delay their

advance. This was successfully done, and that night we marched back to El Arish victorious but deadly tired. The British force had marched 29 miles throughout the night of January 8, had fought for 10 hours on the day of January 9, and on the night of January 9 marched back 29 miles, an important objective fully attained. It was a cavalry operation of the first order, and an operation only possible for cavalry.

The R.G.H., with the rest of the force, assembled at 2.30 in the afternoon of January 8 and marched in column of squadrons, each squadron in troop column, over the sand, which was now getting firmer in places than the desert left behind.

As it became dusk no talking or smoking was allowed. A short halt was to be made at Sheik Zowaiid, and arrangements made whereby the natives of that small place were to be prevented from getting away to give notice of the approach to the Turk. All went well, and the gunners deserve every credit for the manner in which they kept up with the rest of the column in the heavy going, due, no doubt, to a great extent to their gun carriages and limbers being mounted on specially prepared wheels.

Our force arrived at dawn, and as the men were just sitting down to a hasty meal orders were given for the 5th Brigade to mount and gallop some knolls towards the enemy's redoubt. The R.G.H. led this advance and gained the last cover, coming under machine gunfire from the enemy's position. Snipers from the sand dunes along the coast were now busy, and "B" Squadron went off to the dunes to secure our left flank and prevent any of the enemy getting round it. The sand was very deep on the dunes, and progress for horses, carrying fully equipped men with their rations and their own feeds, very slow. These dunes make excellent places for snipers, being blown into all sorts of shapes by the varying winds. During this period the other units of the force had gone round the right flank, so that the enemy's trenches were practically surrounded. Eventually it was

reported that "B" Squadron had got into touch with the N.Z. Brigade, who had taken the police barracks building on the boundary between Palestine and Sinai. Shortly after, to the great sorrow of all ranks, news was received that Major H. F. Clifford, 2nd in command of the regiment, had been killed.

Our machine guns had been doing very useful work on the enemy trenches, and, as the Turkish fire appeared to be less severe, "D" Squadron was ordered to move along the foot of the dunes and advance on the enemy, in conjunction with "B" Squadron. They managed to get a certain distance when the Turks' machine guns again opened fire on them, and they were forced into the dunes. Major Turner, commanding the squadron, was among the wounded. The Worcestershire Yeomanry also took up a position in the sand dunes. Between the dunes and the Turkish position was a sloping hill rising to a point, around which the Turks had dug trenches and emplacements. It afforded a perfect field of fire to the enemy and offered no cover to our men.

About 3.30 orders were given for a general advance dismounted. The Worcestershire Yeomanry came into action on the right of the R.G.H. and our "A," "D," and "B" Squadrons, R.G.H., in the order named, advanced by rushes, supported by our machine guns. Every available man from the horse-holders was brought up, and support was supplied by a squadron of Warwick Yeomanry who had been engaged against enemy trenches some distance away on the right.

In spite of the absence of cover the men responded splendidly to the officers' orders, and the stretcher-bearers, though unable to place the wounded in any sheltered spot, carried out their duties under fire in a most praiseworthy manner. Just as it was getting dusk, "A" Squadron being about 200 yds. from the enemy trench, news arrived that the trenches had been taken from the other side, and orders were given to retire to the horses. The firing ceased, and arrangements had



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to be made as to collecting wounded and return to Sheik Zowaiid for water. Each regiment detailed an officer and some men to assist the M.O.'s in their work, which was greatly complicated by a dark, black night. The wounded had to be searched for in the sand dunes. The enemy stuck to their position in a most stubborn manner, doubtless aware that their own forces were not a great distance away and no doubt expecting to be relieved by them. They certainly did make an attempt, though rather late in the day, only to be met and heavily attacked by an Australian Light Horse Brigade, and, learning that their friends who still survived at Rafa had surrendered, they retired from whence they came.

The force assembled at Sheik Zowaiid, and, after watering and feeding the horses, the march back to camp at El Arish commenced at 1.30 a.m., arriving there at 9 a.m.

Our casualties throughout the day had been 1 officer and 8 O.R.'s killed, 4 officers and 33 O.R.'s wounded, 11 horses and 2 mules killed.

The Turk accepted his defeat and did not attempt to garrison Rafa again. He had now been pressed back out of the Sinai province of Egypt and we were forcing him across the Palestine frontier. The territory we were occupying was part of the land of the old Philistines. There was much speculation as to whether the predominant type of native inhabitant, a tall fellow with reddish hair and blue eyes, was a descendant of the old Philistine blood or of a Western European stock left in the Crusades.

On January 11 our camp at El Arish was extended so as to give more space between squadrons. All formations, too, were ordered to construct deep dug-outs in the sand—a difficult order to obey, as there was little or no timber for revetting and the sand was very loose. Enemy aircraft were very active, and precautions had also to be taken against enemy submarines shelling the camp from the sea.

On the afternoon of January 11 the regiment was paraded for a brigade memorial service, and G.O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade read letters from the G.O.C. Desert Column and the Inspector-General of Cavalry congratulating the 5th Mounted Brigade on their conduct in the Rafa action.

The 5th Mounted Brigade had suffered more severely than any other formation in the fighting. The task it had carried out was not a spectacular one—it was, in effect, holding the back gate of Rafa so that the Turkish force should not escape—but the Turks fought with particular obstinacy to try to open up their line of retreat, and seemed to have put a large proportion of their machine guns into action at that point.

The regiment now took up patrol work again. On January 14 the regiment's horses were inspected by the G.O.C. All ranks had anti-cholera and anti-typhoid inoculation, and this, with daily bombing by the enemy and an occasional dust storm, were the chief troubles of the remainder of the month.

On January 28 it was announced that Sergt. William Edward Price had been awarded the Military Medal for gallantry.

On January 29 the regiment marched to El Burj and took up patrol duty towards Sheik Zowaiid.

Several drafts had arrived during January, and on January 31 the strength of the regiment was 21 officers, 403 O.R.'s, 419 horses, 22 mules, 51 camels, with 28 native auxiliaries.

El Burj, which the R.G.H. occupied during the early part of February, was a pleasant camp with a grove of tamarisk trees about a mile from the sea, half way between El Arish and Rafa. Fish could be got to supplement rations. The place was on the old caravan route of King Solomon's days and was well provided with water. Another useful amenity of the place was the presence of colonies of ants, which were found to be most efficacious in clearing uniforms and bedding of vermin. Any article

exposed on a sand-hill was very quickly cleaned up. Enemy aeroplanes were, however, a constant nuisance, and a small aerodrome with three fighting planes was established near El Burj to attack enemy bombers when the chance came.

Meanwhile the organisation for our next forward movement went on apace. Rail-head and the pipe line (carrying water from the Sweet Water Canal at Kantara!) progressed daily. To allow cars to pass over the desert sand a "wire road" had been constructed from Kantara. This wire road was made by pegging down rabbit-proof netting on a strip of the desert sand. It gave a fairly firm surface. The use of the wire road was forbidden to mounted troops. Wells were dug at Sheik Zowaiid under the protection of R.G.H. and other patrols. Turkish deserters came in almost every day and some captures of camels were made.

On February 14 the advance guard of the railway construction party appeared at El Burj.

On February 22 it was reported that the Turk had a large outpost force in Khan Yunus and that it was desirable to destroy it. The task was assigned to the Anzac Light Horse Brigade. The 5th Mounted Brigade were detailed to provide night outposts to the forces engaged, the R.G.H. supplying the right sector.

February closed with the railway at Sheik Zowaiid and preparations being pressed on for the forthcoming attack on Gaza.

CHAPTER XIII

AT THE GATES OF GAZA (SPRING, 1917)

THE two unsuccessful attacks on Gaza in the spring of 1917 were destined to mark the end of the second phase of the Eastern campaign. Gen. Sir Archibald Murray since taking over the command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force had done excellent work in clearing the whole of the Sinai province of Egypt up to the Palestine frontier of the enemy. He had changed the nature of the campaign from a somewhat spiritless defensive to a vigorous offensive. He had brought the railway and the water-pipe line up to the very gates of Gaza. But the two Gaza battles—in the first of which a very daring scheme was marred by a delay of two hours, due chiefly to weather mischance, and the second of which represented a forlorn hope to retrieve the first—stopped his advance and ultimately led to a change of command.

The first attack on Gaza was certainly a very daring scheme. Its idea seems to be clearly traceable to the fine Rafa exploit. There the skill, courage, and hardihood of the cavalry had brought off a plan to raid into the enemy's territory and "cut out" in naval fashion a strong point, surrounding it and capturing its garrison. Gaza was intended to be a repetition of Rafa on a much greater scale. Just as at Rafa the problem was to subdue quickly a comparatively small entrenched force, whilst holding off from it the help of much greater enemy forces in the near vicinity, so at Gaza the garrison was to be surrounded by the cavalry "raiding" to its rear and eastern flank, and subdued quickly whilst the very much more considerable enemy forces in the near neighbourhood were held at arm's length.

This Gaza plan was very nearly brought off in the first battle. Our troops actually got into the town (indeed, there was one "medical casualty" reported as the result of the brief occupation). It is allowable to surmise that if there had been better weather luck during the morning, or if there had been the naval co-operation that was invoked for the hopeless second battle, or if the reserves had been thrown forward during the late afternoon of March 26, the day might have been marked by a complete victory. But things went wrong. The subsequent claim to "victory" did not improve matters, and the attempt on April 17 to do what had been possible under surprise conditions, but was not possible with the enemy fully warned and strongly reinforced, was a final mistake.

Some changes in equipment and in organisation of the R.G.H. were made on the eve of the Gaza battles. One Hotchkiss gun per regiment was issued on March 1 for instructional purposes, and classes were commenced to teach its drill. (Full issue of this gun—twelve—was made on April 1.) On March 2 the regiment was absorbed in the Imperial Mounted Division, which, with the Anzac Mounted Division and the Imperial Camel Corps, made up the Desert Column, under Lieut.-Gen. Sir P. Chetwode. This Desert Column constituted the mounted strength of the Eastern Forces under Lieut.-Gen. Sir Charles Dobell.

On March 5 the G.O.C., Major-Gen. Hodgson, Imperial Mounted Division, inspected the regiment. On March 6 regimental orders recorded from the London *Gazette* that the following had been mentioned in despatches: Temp. Lieut.-Col. R. M. Yorke, D.S.O., Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., Lieut. F. A. Mitchell, M.C., No. 676 R.S.M. A. Butler, 1930 A.S.S.M. C. F. Garrett, 1362 Sergt. J. Handy, 2390 Sergt. G. Catley, 2024 Corpl. J. R. Waters.

On March 7 the 16th Machine Gun Squadron was formed, and the following were transferred to it: Capt. G. N. Horlick to command the squadron; Capt. the Hon.

E. J. B. Herbert, second in command ; 2nd Lieut. A. C. Byard ; 33 O.R.'s, 34 horses, and 8 mules.

On March 10 the brigade moved to Sheik Zowaiid. The marching out strength of the regiment was 18 officers, 353 O.R.'s, 397 horses, and 14 mules.

On March 21 the brigade moved to Rafa. The marching out strength of the regiment was 21 officers, 368 O.R.'s, 402 horses, and 10 mules.

On March 23, as a preliminary to the operations contemplated around Gaza, the Imperial Mounted Division carried out a reconnaissance towards Gaza. The 5th Mounted Brigade reconnoitred the Wadi-El-Ghuzze between Sheik Nebban and Abu Bakra. The marching out strength was 20 officers, 337 O.R.'s, 388 horses, and 10 mules. The enemy were observed near Gaza, but the 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade on our left alone gained touch with them. The bottom of the wadi was hard and dry in this sector, and wheeled traffic could cross it in those places where the banks were not too steep. But this hardening of the ground made the horses shin-sore after being used to soft going for so long. An enemy aeroplane came down low and used its machine gun on the Warwick Yeomanry on their way home. One man was wounded. The brigade returned to camp at Rafa.

On March 25 the brigade moved out from Rafa to Deir-el-Belah, a distance of 12 miles, travelling along the beach road. On arriving the R.G.H. were ordered to report to the 53rd Division for orders for the Gaza operations.

The plan of the first Battle of Gaza was, in detail, that the mounted forces should penetrate into the enemy's lines and take post north and east of the town, preventing reinforcements reaching it or the garrison escaping ; that the infantry should move up from south of the town ; and that a simultaneous attack from three quarters should carry the position and capture the garrison, which would have no road of escape, as on the west was the sea. The difficulties of the plan were great and the hazards

extreme, but it was felt that they were worth incurring, for the Turk *morale* was always at its worst when he was threatened along his lines of retreat, and to defeat the enemy after surrounding him would ensure his annihilation and not merely his dispersal.

In the event the mounted divisions carried out the extraordinarily difficult tasks set for them—encircled Gaza to the north and east, held back the enemy's reinforcements, and actually pushed their way partly into the town. The infantry attack on the south also prospered to some extent, but at nightfall the battle was broken off and the troops had to retire, because the town had not been carried and the position of the mounted troops, with enemy forces massing in their rear, was accounted to be too dangerous. It was a tragic ending to the early promise of the day.

On March 23 the position preparatory to attack was this. The Turks were entrenched in and around Gaza with about 4,000 troops. They had much larger forces north-east of the town at Nejed, Huj, Abu Hareira, and Tel-el-Nejileh (all within from 10 to 20 miles of the town), and a strong force at Beersheba. Gaza, to be taken at all, had to be taken quickly, or the enemy could concentrate an overwhelming force on the attackers. The 53rd and 54th Infantry Divisions were assigned to the positions of attack south of Gaza. The Desert Column, made up of the Imperial Mounted Division (less R.G.H., attached 53rd division) and the Anzac Mounted Division, were to move out on the night of the 25th–26th, and, passing east of the town, to surround it, the Anzac Mounted Division taking up positions on the north stretching from Huj to the sea, the Imperial Mounted Division positions on the east from Huj to Abu Teibij.

At 2.30 a.m., March 26, the Desert Column moved out, the Anzacs first, the Imperials following. Trouble began almost at once, for a body of infantry had bivouacked on their route. This necessitated a deviation, and caused some delay. Then a thick fog came on and caused

further delay. It was nearly 8 o'clock when the fog lifted, and the head of the column had then just reached the main road from Gaza to Beersheba. Here it was attacked by Turkish camelry and beat them off. Shortly afterwards aeroplane attacks began, and the cavalry had to dismount to drive them off. This caused more delay. By 11.30 a.m. the Anzac Division was on the north in touch with the sea and the Imperial Division in position east of the town. The Gaza garrison had sent out a despairing message for help, and the 53rd Turkish Divisional Commander and his staff were captured as they were making their way into Gaza to assist in its defences. The day seemed to be prospering, but every move was two hours later than the arranged time, and this delay proved fatal.

With noon came excessive heat, and the enemy began attacking heavily from the east and the north in an effort to relieve the beleaguered garrison. The mounted divisions had to divide their attention between holding back the enemy, pressing hard from north and east, and pushing on with a direct attack on Gaza. At 5 p.m. the first intimation of the ultimate failure of the operation came with an order to send to the rear all heavy transport, shortly after six the order came to retire. The Anzac Mounted Division withdrew first, and it was not until after midnight that the Imperial Mounted Division could begin to march south. The retirement of the mounted troops under circumstances of great difficulty was effected without serious loss.

The rôle assigned to the R.G.H. in this action by the 53rd Division, under whose orders it was placed, was to co-operate with the infantry on its sea flank south of Gaza. About midnight March 25-26 the regiment received orders to cross the Wadi Ghuzze at daylight under cover of the 2/4th Royal West Kent Regiment and co-operate with them. The rôle of this column was to divert the enemy's attention to our left flank, to demonstrate, and not to allow itself to be involved

in a close hostile attack from which it would be unable to extricate itself. Should the enemy attack in strength it had orders to adopt rearguard tactics and delay the enemy's advance as much as possible, the R.G.H. to pay special attention to the seashore and to be responsible for the safety of a section of the 15th Heavy Battery, R.G.A.

The regiment moved from Deir-el-Belah at 2 a.m. March 26 accompanied by the Gloucester section of the 16th Machine Gun Squadron. A heavy fog came on about daylight. The regiment crossed the wadi at about 6 a.m., "B" Squadron acting as advance guard, and proceeded up the coast line with a patrol on the beach. This squadron shortly came into touch with enemy patrols, who retired. Owing to the fog progress was delayed for a time. Two squadrons at this stop held an advanced post about two miles north of the wadi with one squadron in reserve, the 2/4th Royal West Kent Regiment co-operating on the right.

On the fog clearing about 9 a.m. regimental headquarters were established on the coast some 600 yds. south-south-west of Green Hill. An advanced squadron was holding Green Hill, about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles north of the mouth of the wadi. On its right another squadron was occupying some sand dunes and to its right the mounted troops were supported by the left flank of the infantry. Owing to the activity of snipers it was difficult to estimate the number of enemy holding the trenches.

In the afternoon, about 2 o'clock, the West Kents sent a message that they were advancing, and asking the R.G.H. to conform to the movement. This was done, but later in the afternoon the infantry began to fall back, at the same time drawing in their left flank, so that a gap was left between them and the R.G.H. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon (when the decision was reached to break off the battle) the O.C. R.G.H., going forward to reconnoitre, found that "D" Squadron was some distance in advance of the infantry, and under heavy fire. "D" Squadron was reinforced with the reserve squadron and

ordered to hold on until dusk and then retire south of the wadi. This was done and casualties brought in, and the regiment bivouacked on the south side of the wadi (less "A" Squadron, which provided protection for the Battery and a patrol on the beach). The next morning patrols recrossed the wadi and found that the enemy were taking up the posts they had held the previous day.

At one time it appeared as if a determined advance by the enemy was to be made, but with our machine guns coming into action, which were well placed, the enemy retired to their trenches.

About 3 p.m. the R.G.H. were relieved by the 22nd Brigade, having orders to return to Belah. After crossing the wadi and watering the horses an enemy plane came over and dropped some lights. The R.G.H. were soon on the march and the last squadron just clear of the ground when the Turkish guns opened on the spot where we had halted. The Turks continued to drop shells along a road parallel to a route the R.G.H. had taken for some considerable distance, but no damage was done, and we encountered our Q.M., Lieut. Brain, and his camel transport, with rations for men and horses. On arrival at Belah the C.O. and Adjutant went off to find the brigade, and eventually, with the aid of a wire (it being very dark), going from another unit found Desert Corps, but it was not until the following morning that touch with brigade was established.

The rôle assigned to the R.G.H. did not bring them into the central area of the battle, but they carried out a useful task with skill and address. The Commander-in-Chief in his despatches on the battle wrote :

The Gloucestershire Hussars, with a battalion and a section of 60-prs., crossed the wadi near the sea coast, and for the remainder of the day successfully carried out their rôle of working up the sand-hills to cover the left of the 53rd Division, and to keep the enemy employed between the village of Sheik Ahmed and Gaza. At the same time the divisional squadron secured a good gun position and an excellent observation station for

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another section of 60-prs. on the far side of the Wadi Ghuzze, in the neighbourhood of the main road from Gaza to Khan Yunus.

At Deir-el-Belah the effective fighting strength of the regiment was 23 officers, 335 O.R.'s, 388 riding horses, 25 pack horses, 11 pack mules. Transport was attached to the divisional train. The following note is from the diary of an officer whom I have previously quoted :

March 30.—An officer went out yesterday and tried to buy a lamb, but the Bedouins said they were all girl lambs and would not sell. The boy lambs come in next week. He bargained for a fowl for biscuits and got it.

Preparations were now made for a second attack on Gaza, and during this interval the regiment did outpost work. The following promotions and honours were announced :

Major (Temp. Lieut.-Col.) R. M. Yorke, D.S.O., was appointed Section Commander, Coastal Section, Delta and Western Force, and was granted the temporary rank of Brig.-Gen. whilst employed as Section Commander (March 3, 1917). S.S.M. Thomas Gilbert Smart was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for gallantry and devotion to duty in the field (March 21, 1917). S.S.M. Clement Charles Godwin was awarded the Croix de Guerre in recognition of his distinguished service during the campaign. Brig.-Gen. P. D. Fitzgerald, D.S.O., assumed command of the brigade *vice* Brig.-Gen. E. A. Wiggin, D.S.O., relinquished April 10, 1917. Lieut. Lord Apsley was attached to Brigade H.Q. as Asst. Staff Capt., April 10, 1917.

For the second attack on Gaza it was decided that three infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions should be employed. The plan was first to seize the ridge south of Gaza and from there to develop an attack on the town itself. The enemy force was reckoned at five infantry divisions and one cavalry division. No encircling movement was to be attempted until the enemy's front was

pierced, and the first rôle of the mounted troops was to protect the right flank of the infantry and to "contain" any reinforcements coming from Beersheba.

The first stage of the attack prospered. The infantry, advancing at dawn on April 17, occupied the Sheik-Abbas—Mansura ridge south of Gaza with but little opposition, and set to work to consolidate the position; meanwhile the mounted troops covered their right flank.

In the second stage of the attack on April 19 two British monitors and the French battleship *Requin* co-operated. The cavalry opened a containing attack on our right flank at dawn and a naval bombardment of the town began at the same time. The infantry attack on the town began two hours later, and achieved some success until noon, when heavy enemy counter-attacks began. The cavalry continued to meet with success, though suffering heavy loss from the enemy's artillery, but by 4 p.m. it was clear that the infantry could not get through that day and the order was given to dig in and hold on for the night. On the night of April 19 it was decided not to attempt a further attack the next day.

On April 21 it was agreed that any immediate attack was hopeless, and a period of "trench warfare" opened. This decision was followed by some changes in the command. General Dobell was succeeded in the command of the Eastern Force by Lieut.-Gen. Sir Philip Chetwode, and he was succeeded in the command of the Desert Column by Major-Gen. Sir H. G. Chauvel.

In this second Battle of Gaza the R.G.H. acted with the mounted division on the right flank. On April 17 at midnight orders were received to march to El Mendur, with orders to turn down the Wadi-el-Sharia and clear out a party of enemy reported to be at Khirbet-Um-Rijl. The brigade took over the outpost line from El Munkheileh to Khirbet Erk, the R.G.H. being left of the line from El Munkheileh to a wadi north of Khirbet-Um-Rijl. Considerable parties of the enemy were observed all day holding the ground covering the Gaza—Bir-Saba road, and

the forward observation line exchanged shots most of the day. At 12 noon the enemy shelled the regimental headquarters at El Munkheileh, but no casualties were incurred. The regiment was relieved by the Bucks Yeomanry in the afternoon and proceeded to water at Hiseia, distance four miles back, arriving there about 5 p.m. and proceeding thence to bivouac at Tel-el-Jemmi, distance five miles, which was reached at 7 p.m. The day was very hot and several men were affected by the sun, including 2nd Lieut. G. E. Hookham, who went to hospital.

On April 18 the brigade remained in reserve at Jemmi and proceeded in the evening to El Hiseia to water.

The next day the brigade moved forward, reaching Munkheileh at 4 a.m. Shortly afterwards the bombardment had commenced, and by 6 a.m. the brigade had moved into the battle line, the R.G.H. being on the right of the line. "D" Squadron was on the left, in touch with the Worcester Yeomanry, "A" Squadron was on the right, and "B" Squadron (plus M.G. section) was in reserve. An advance was made up the Wadi Baha. The Anzac Mounted Division was responsible for guarding the brigade's right flank, but was hindered considerably by the enemy, who were in occupation of Sausage Hill. Artillery support was given on our right flank by the Ayrshire Battery, who were on the south-west corner of Sausage Hill. The enemy artillery fire was heavy, but the dismounted yeomanry continued their attack along the Gaza—Beersheba road, though they had practically no cover. Shortly after 9 o'clock a squadron of Warwick Yeomanry supported the right of the brigade, which was being enfiladed from trenches on the north end of Sausage Hill, and orders were received for the regiment to advance no farther than was necessary to keep in touch with the Worcesters on the left. Later a squadron of N.Z.M.R. Brigade came up on the right as escort to the Ayrshire battery, and a message was received that no advance was to be made until Sausage Hill had been

cleared by the N.Z.M.R. Brigade. At noon, owing to the line having been swung to the left, leaving the right flank exposed, considerable opposition was met with from this quarter, and as the N.Z.M.R. Brigade was unable to make much headway against Sausage Hill, "B" Squadron of the R.G.H. had to be brought up to guard the right flank. The enemy was strong in artillery and had the exact range, causing considerable casualties. We asked for further artillery support, but the enemy's guns could not be silenced and their aeroplanes found and heavily bombed our batteries. During the day two enemy aeroplanes and one of our machines were brought down.

Early in the afternoon the 3rd and 4th A.L.H. Brigades, who had reached the Gaza—Bir-Saba road at Khirbet Siham, were compelled to retire, and the enemy, who had been strongly reinforced at Sausage Hill, heavily counter-attacked against Wadi Baha. The Warwick Yeomanry up to now had been in reserve, but were sent up to support the Worcester Yeomanry on the left. An hour later the counter-attack of the enemy was checked, but they still continued to press heavily, and by 2.15 p.m. had been again reinforced and begun again to advance. Very shortly after the Australians on both our right and left were retiring, and as it was certain that the R.G.H. would be forced to withdraw in conformity with their movement, "B" Squadron was sent back to a covering position. The 6th Brigade now came up on the left, and the enemy were again checked. At 4.45 p.m. orders were received for the withdrawal to take place at 6.50 p.m., but owing to inability to move the wounded by this time the evacuation was deferred until 7.45 p.m. Within an hour the brigade was entirely withdrawn, and returned down the wadi to El Munkheileh. The brigade then proceeded to water at Tel-el-Jemmi, and from thence to bivouac at El Mendur, which they reached at 2.15 a.m. Horse lines were put down, and everyone except the line pickets and sentries immediately fell asleep on the stony ground.

The brigade was kept in reserve on April 20, with orders to be ready to move at half an hour's notice. During the morning the horses were watered at Tel-el-Jemmi, a distance of three miles back, and on returning orders were received to entrench an outpost line from El Mendur to Tel-el-Jemmi. There was much aerial activity during the day, the enemy dropping bombs and smoke balls. At 4.45 p.m. orders were received to move at 5 p.m. to Munkheileh to take over the outpost line from the 6th Mounted Brigade. The R.G.H. were on the left, in touch with the 3rd A.L.H. Brigade, holding the line as far as the wadi north of El Rijl. The Worcester Yeomanry prolonged the line on the right along the Wadi-el-Sharia, with the Warwick Yeomanry in reserve at brigade headquarters. "A" Squadron R.G.H. held the right of the line and "B" Squadron (plus one section of M.G.) the left, two troops of "D" Squadron in the centre and one troop in support. A quiet but wakeful night was passed. Digging in was continued the next day, when "B" and "D" Squadrons, with two sections of M.G., occupied the outpost line, with "A" Squadron in reserve. Lieut. Turner and the Desert Column Escort Troop rejoined the regiment. The night was quiet. April 22 was occupied in trench digging, and an observation post on Sausage Hill was actively engaged with enemy snipers. Orders were received to withdraw in the evening, and the whole brigade moved back to Abasan-el-Kebir, reaching there at 2.30 a.m. after riding over precipitous banks in the darkness. At 8 a.m. orders were received to move to a new camp $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Abasan-el-Kebir, and on April 24 the brigade proceeded to another camp near Khan Yunus in order to be near the horse water-troughs.

CHAPTER XIV

A PAUSE IN THE ADVANCE (SUMMER, 1917)

A PERIOD of inaction followed the second Battle of Gaza. It was for the R.G.H. a time of some anxiety and of strenuous labour. There was some apprehension lest the enemy, encouraged by his successful defence of Gaza, should take the offensive, and the burden fell on the mounted troops of keeping in close touch with his outpost line and of checking any developments in this direction. Only two divisions of mounted troops were available at first, and the task was divided so that each division kept the front line in turn, whilst the other rested at Abasan-el-Kebir, to be close at hand if required. This made for very hard work. Enemy aircraft also were constantly busy, emboldened by the fact that our Air Force was very weak in strength and still weaker in regard to the quality of its machines. Indeed, on the position as regards *materiel* we had no warrant to contest the air at all at this stage, and it was only the self-sacrificing gallantry of our airmen which sent them, on their much inferior machines, to meet the Fokkers of the enemy. Further, our right flank was "in the air," and despite all vigilance it was impossible to prevent the frequent penetration of our rear line by enemy spies.

At the end of April the regiment was at El Sha'uth, which had been a strong point for the enemy before the Rafa operations. This redoubt still showed with what care it had been prepared by the Turks and their German masters. The trenches were exceptionally well made, and the dug-outs included underground stables for the cavalry. Surrounding the position was a network of pits, to safeguard against cavalry attacks. The position,

indeed, would have been a ready-made strong point for ourselves except that the trenches all faced the wrong way. The task of adapting them was a dreary one, and, with the care of the horses, kept the men constantly busy. As the brigade's transport had been passed over temporarily to the Divisional Ammunition Co'umn supplies were scanty and the shortness of water prevented any issue for washing purposes. The discomfort and hardship of it all raised the sick rate quickly, the men suffering particularly from septic sores.

Some Turkish cavalry patrols captured stated that they were part of a force sent down from the Caucasus. They were very well equipped and mounted. There was, however, not much fighting, as the enemy showed but little enterprise. We heard constantly of the reinforcement of the Turkish forces, and were always on the alert for an attack, but when we came in contact (as we did constantly) with their patrols, they showed hardly any offensive spirit. Owing to the precarious hold we had on the position plans of evacuation were prepared, and a reserve of water was always collected by day and stored in canvas tanks in the trenches, lest the wells, which were in advance of our position, should be lost to the enemy by a night-attack. A supply dump was also formed, so that we could hold out in case of being surrounded. All these precautions were, in the event, superfluous. An attack by the enemy was definitely promised for May 1, but it did not develop. The troops, after standing to all night, had nothing more to suffer than one of the usual bombing attacks.

On May 2 the regiment was relieved by the Australian Light Horse Regiment, and marched to Beni Sela, a distance of about five miles. Here a draft of 18 other ranks joined. A week was spent at Beni Sela, the time being occupied in general training, Hotchkiss gun training, and signalling classes. The regiment also took part in a divisional gas demonstration.

On May 8 the regiment left Beni Sela and marched to

a new camp at Tel-el-Marakeb, on the seashore. This was a very welcome move, as the regiment had been continuously at strenuous work since the first Battle of Gaza and most of the men were suffering from septic sores and from vermin. They had had no opportunity of washing or of changing their clothes for several weeks. All ranks were eager to seize the chance of swimming in the sea, and the standard of health and cheerfulness improved very quickly. The only inconvenience of the camp at Tel-el-Marakeb was that, owing to the activities of enemy aircraft, tents were not allowed, and all lights had to be extinguished by 8.30 p.m. The lack of tents was a hardship, as the heat of the sun during the day was already—thus early in the season—very great.

Whilst in camp at Tel-el-Marakeb Capt. F. A. Mitchell went on leave to England and 2nd Lieut. R. E. Guise also left for England to report at the War Office. Training in the Hotchkiss gun and signalling was continued, but it was necessary that one troop should be detached daily to deal with hostile aircraft if an attempt were made to attack the camp. Owing to the lack of effective Air Force on our own side enemy aircraft were at this stage of the campaign very daring, and we heard of enemy aircraft making a landing and attacking the railway 60 miles behind our line.

On May 15 the regiment left Tel-el-Marakeb with regret and moved to El Fukhari, in the Abasan watering area. An attack by an enemy aeroplane on the 16th and 17th and an appalling dust-storm on May 18, 19, and 20, marked this spell of duty at El Fukhari. The dust-storm, with a fiercely hot wind, lasted until the night of the 20th, and everything, including food supplies, was filled with sand. A more pleasant incident was a visit to the ablution area at Abasan-el-Kebir on May 19 for bathing and washing clothes.

On May 22 the regiment left El Fukhari and marched to Gamli, and moved on from there the next day to Khasif. An operation was planned for May 23 to destroy the

enemy railway lines between Asluj and El Auja. This railway line between Asluj and El Auja was the one which the Turks had built southwards from Beersheba in 1915 for their attack on the canal. From its termination at El Auja a good road led to the Maghara Hills, and an enemy force in this district, although separated from our railway line by some 20 miles of desert, might threaten our lines of communication south of El Arish, via the Hod Bayud. (In November, 1916, our brigade had been watching the Maghara Hills for this reason.)

The Imperial Camel Corps, one squadron of the Imperial Mounted Division, and two squadrons R.E. were detailed to destroy the railway. The Anzac Mounted Division was detailed as a covering force to watch the approaches from Beersheba. The Imperial Mounted Division's task was to distract the enemy's attention at Beersheba from the raid on the railway. The 5th Mounted Brigade was held in reserve at a point one mile south of Khasif. The R.G.H. acted as advance guard to the brigade and proceeded to Gamli, marching as light as possible, with one day's rations (plus iron rations) on the man and two full nosebags on the horse.

Previous to the operation parties of men had been put through a course of special training in quick means of cutting rails. In the result the operation was completely successful, for a large section of the railway, including one bridge, was destroyed. Subsequently the Anzac Mounted Division covered the retreat of the railway-raiding party, and later the Imperial Mounted Division, in which was included the R.G.H., covered the retreat of the Anzacs.

On May 24 the regiment left Gamli and arrived at El Fukhari camp that morning, suffering an 'attack from enemy aeroplanes while watering *en route*. On May 25 a detachment of the regiment left El Fukhari under 2nd Lieut. Ellis for Deir-el-Belah for duty at the new wells. On May 26 Capt. and Adj. Wykeham-Musgrave rejoined the regiment from hospital. On May 28 the regiment

moved out to Tel-el-Fara, and on May 29 acted as covering force for an artillery reconnaissance of the enemy positions. The brigade was engaged in skirmishing with the enemy's patrols throughout the day, and Pte. C. H. Ward was killed. His body was brought back and buried near the camp. On May 31 a reconnaissance to Wadi Ghuzze was carried out by a detachment from the regiment. At the end of the month the regiment was still at Tel-el-Fara and its strength was 16 officers, 302 O.R.'s, and 371 horses.

The month of June repeated the experiences of May. The efforts of our command were still directed to keeping the enemy's reconnaissance patrols in check and to keeping his morale down by minor enterprises. The bulk of the work to effect this naturally fell upon the mounted forces.

On the first of June the brigade left its bivouac camp at Tel Itweil and crossed the wadi in front to take up an advance line to cover a reconnaissance of the position by the staff. This reconnaissance was a great deal interfered with by a thick fog in the early morning. The R.G.H. held the advance line from Rashid-Bek to Khor-el-Ajram. On their right were the Worcestershire Yeomanry and one battery of the H.A.C. A section of machine guns was attached. No close contact was established with the enemy, but there was an exchange of fire with enemy patrols at long range during the day. Shortly after noon the brigade was withdrawn and returned to camp in the evening.

The following week was taken up by constant entrenchment operations, the regiment finding a digging party every day for the entrenched camp being formed at El Ghabi. This constant entrenching work under the tropical sun was felt severely by the men, and almost every day there were cases of heat-stroke admitted to hospital. Those who were left in camp had almost as strenuous work, for it was necessary for one man to take charge of four horses. Quite half the strength of the

regiment was suffering from septic sores, and had to go on sick parade every day for medical dressing, but could not be excused duty.

On June 11 there was a slight break in the tedium of constant digging operations, when "A" Squadron was detailed as escort to a section of 60-pr. guns, which proceeded east as far as Karm to help in a reconnaissance carried out by the 6th Mounted Brigade. On this reconnaissance very few of the enemy forces were seen, and the artillery did not come into action, as no good targets offered. On June 14 Major Turner and the squadron leaders carried out another reconnaissance of the El Bugar area.

On June 20 (when Major Turner, D.S.O., was in temporary command of the regiment, in the place of Lieut.-Col. Palmer, D.S.O., who was sick) the regiment received orders to take over outpost duties from the Worcestershire Yeomanry until the 25th inst., when a special operation was to be carried out. The regiment left camp on the 20th less details left in camp under 2nd Lieut. L. L. Wilkins. The plan of holding the outpost line at this stage was to throw out advance posts during the day and withdraw them behind a line of barbed wire at night, leaving, in positions about one mile forward of the barbed wire, six standing patrols. No horses were off-saddled in the outpost line either by day or by night.

For June 25 a "drive" was arranged with a view to trapping the enemy's outposts. They were accustomed to approach near our barbed wire line under cover of darkness when our day outposts were withdrawn. The idea was to throw out during the night of the 24th special outposts to penetrate into the enemy country as far as possible, for these outposts to take up positions, and at dawn to converge inwards on our barbed wire, driving before them any enemy patrols that they encountered. In addition to the R.G.H., the Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and Bucks Yeomanry were to take part in this operation. The part assigned to the R.G.H. was to hold

the line at El Geheir and Imleih with the light armoured cars. The net thrown out was to close in on Karm, where the expected bag of prisoners was to be sorted out.

The operation orders issued to the R.G.H. stated that squadrons would provide their own protection during the approach march and the drive. So as not to alarm the enemy there was to be a minimum of signalling, and the helio would only be used by Brigade H.Q. in case of need, when any unit called up could reply by the same means. Flags also were to be very sparingly used. Officers were instructed to show dash and initiative in intervening in any combat entered into by neighbouring units. The troops were to march as light as possible. The pursuit was to be left to the discretion of leaders, subject to the general instructions that within the area of the drive any Turks were to be followed up by a force equal to their own until their capture by another unit seemed certain, and that the general alignment of the drive should be kept by all bodies not actually pursuing parties of the enemy; and that enemy stragglers breaking back should be followed up a certain distance if their capture seemed reasonably possible.

For this operation the R.G.H. had a marching out strength of 15 officers, 234 O.R.'s, and 271 animals. The regiment concentrated in the vicinity of Pt. 510 in accordance with orders issued, and moved off at a trot in column of troops in extended order. After proceeding half a mile they came under enemy shell fire from two guns firing H.E. and shrapnel. The ranging was accurate, and 1 officer (2nd Lieut. E. H. Cook) and 3 O.R.'s were slightly wounded, and 1 horse killed and 8 wounded.

On arrival at Pt. 720 about two squadrons of cavalry and 15 to 20 camelmen were seen approaching at a rapid pace from the east. On our opening fire at 1,700 yds. they retired immediately. The approach march was continued and touch gained with the Warwick Yeomanry at about 9.30.

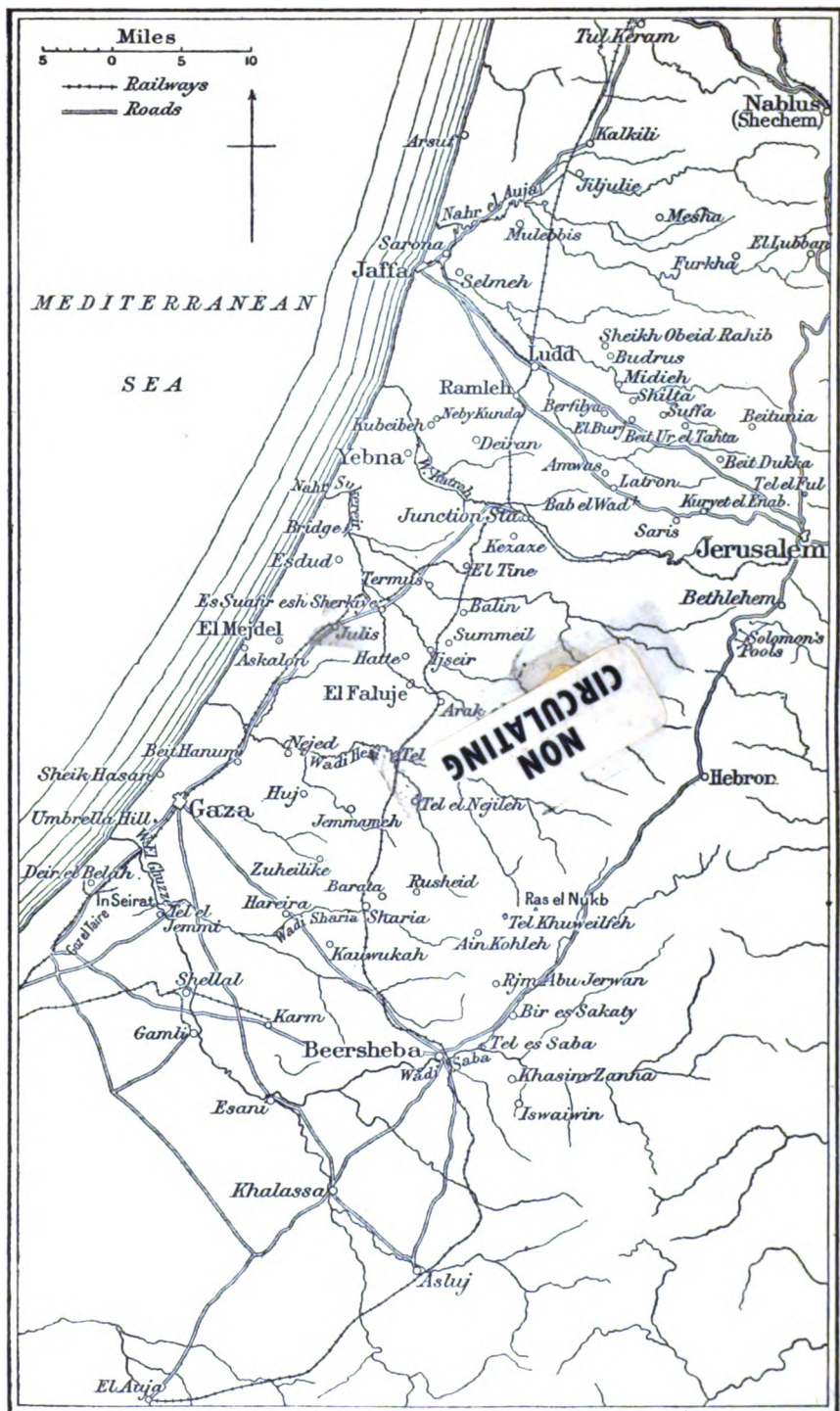
When the troops formed up for the drive rearguards of one troop per squadron took up positions about three-quarters of a mile east of Pt. 720, and engaged the enemy lining ridges about one mile farther east. The drive started at 10 a.m. and was completed at 11.15 a.m.

The result of the operation was disappointing. Our net was thrown out according to plan and closed in well. The sensation as the troops advanced, first at the trot and then at the gallop, was very pleasant, but unfortunately no enemy patrols were encountered within the area netted. The enemy had been warned, probably by friendly Bedouins, and the total bag when it came to be divided up at Karm consisted of one Bedouin boy.

The close of June was marked by a reorganisation of the mounted forces. Gen. Sir Edmund Allenby (later Lord Allenby) had arrived to take over the command, and his first steps were to comb out the base dépôts to add to the man-power in the fighting line; to provide for an increased strength of mounted troops by restoring some units which had been dismounted to the cavalry force; and to secure up-to-date equipment of the Air Force.

The organisation of the mounted troops was now in three divisions, each one of three brigades. The Anzac Mounted Division was made up of two Australian Light Horse Brigades and the New Zealand Rifle Brigade. The Australian Mounted Division was made up of two Australian Light Horse Brigades and the 5th Mounted Brigade (in which the R.G.H. were included). The 5th Mounted Brigade would have preferred to have been in the British Division. Their relations with their Australian comrades were most cordial, but the two brigades with which they were to act were armed and trained as mounted rifles, not as cavalry. The Yeomanry Mounted Division was made up of the 6th, 8th, and 22nd Mounted Brigades of British Yeomanry. The 7th Mounted Brigade became Corps troops, as also did the Imperial Camel Corps Brigade, while the Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade of Indian troops formed part of the Army troops. The

three divisions had each three batteries of artillery, and together formed the Desert Mounted Corps. This new organisation allowed each division to take a period in the front line, a period in support at Abasan-el-Kebir, and a period in rest camp on the beach.



CHAPTER XV

PREPARING FOR VICTORY (SUMMER, 1917)

GEN. SIR EDMUND ALLENBY—afterwards Lord Allenby—assumed command of the Eastern Expeditionary Force on June 28, 1917, and from that date our Army in Palestine marched from victory to victory until the Turkish power was completely crushed. It was one of the most dramatic campaigns in military history for the daring and success of its strategic conceptions, the sureness with which the mind of the enemy was read, and the courage and resolution with which all ranks responded to the calls of the master-mind in control.

General Allenby had as his initial assets high professional skill and a masterful personality—among the Canadians under him on the Western Front he was always known as "The Bull"—and as a cavalry leader he was particularly gifted to recognise the great opportunities that the situation offered for mounted troops. It was probably a part of his cavalry nature that he had a sense of the dramatic in planning and carrying out the movements of his forces, and the effect of this after a short time was to impress the enemy with something of a superstitious awe so that the utmost audacities on his part came to have the appearance of a prudent routine since they "came off" seemingly so inevitably. His mind adapted itself at once to every succeeding phase of the campaign, and at each stage he was pushing to the furthest point of advantage his appreciation of the growing demoralisation of the enemy and the wonderful degree of endurance which a pursuing force wins from constant victory and constant approach to a final conclusion and to a return home.

It was Gen. Allenby's good fortune to have steady support as a rule from London. When he took command political thought in England was intrigued with the idea of securing an end of the world war by way of Palestine, of forcing Germany to her knees by breaking Turkey. The idea was a fallacious one, and at one stage of his great campaign Gen. Allenby found that a late recognition of this was to strip him of some of his best troops, taken to reinforce the French front. But in the summer of 1917 it helped him greatly in securing for him resources—most particularly in Air Force—which had been denied to his predecessor, and in 1918 he had advanced so far on the path of conquest and had so overawed the enemy that he was able to continue with diminished resources.

This regimental history, dealing with one only of the units under his command, is not the place to attempt any analysis of the Allenby campaign. The student of war in the future will, however, study its every detail as a supreme instance of the application of the cavalry spirit, in strategy and in tactics, to warfare in a thinly populated area. The mobility of the mounted arm was exploited to the fullest extent so as to develop a brusque attack upon a vital point, which was not the vital point where the enemy expected the assault. At the opening of the first great movement the enemy awaited an attack on his right flank, resting on the sea, with full confidence in the defences there, and found his left flank, resting on the desert, crushed in and turned. At the opening of the second great movement the enemy was certain that this time he must expect the main attack on his left, from the Jordan Valley, and found his right flank pierced, and through the gap a flood of cavalry poured, which pushed forward and encircled his rear.

Gen. Allenby, on taking command at the end of June, 1917, reported the position to be as follows :

The Turkish Army in Southern Palestine held a strong position extending from the sea at Gaza, roughly along the main Gaza—

Beersheba Road to Beersheba. Gaza had been made into a strong modern fortress, heavily entrenched and wired, offering every facility for protracted defence. The remainder of the enemy's line consisted of a series of strong localities, viz. the Sihan group of works, the Atawineh group, the Baha group, the Abu Hareira—Arab-el-Teeaha trench system, and, finally, the works covering Beersheba. These groups of works were generally from 1,500 to 2,000 yds. apart, except that the distance from the Hareira group to Beersheba was about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The enemy's force was on a wide front, the distance from Gaza to Beersheba being about 30 miles ; but his lateral communications were good, and any threatened point of the line could be very quickly reinforced.

My force was extended on a front of 22 miles—from the sea, opposite Gaza, to Gamli.

Owing to lack of water I was unable, without preparations which would require some considerable time, to approach within striking distance of the enemy, except in the small sector near the sea coast opposite Gaza.

I had decided to strike the main blow against the left flank of the main Turkish position, Hareira and Sheria. The capture of Beersheba was a necessary preliminary to this operation in order to secure the water supplies at that place and to give room for the deployment of the attacking force on the high ground to the north and north-west of Beersheba, from which direction I intended to attack the Hareira—Sheria line.

This front of attack was chosen for the following reasons : the enemy's works in this sector were less formidable than elsewhere, and they were easier of approach than other parts of the enemy's defences. When Beersheba was in our hands we should have an open flank against which to operate, and I could make full use of our superiority in mounted troops ; and a success here offered prospects of pursuing our advantage and forcing the enemy to abandon the rest of his fortified positions, which no other line of attack would afford.

It was important, in order to keep the enemy in doubt up to the last moment as to the real point of attack, that an attack should also be made on the enemy's right at Gaza in conjunction with the main operations.

After considering the problems of reorganisation of the force, of transport and supply, and of establishing supremacy in the air, Gen. Allenby decided on October 31 as the opening day for his attack, and that date was duly observed.

From June on to October the big things afoot affected but little the routine of the R.G.H. On July 1 the regiment moved to Fara East Camp ready to take up duties on the outpost line on the following morning.

The routine followed was as before, with five posts thrown well forward during the day and these withdrawn behind the barbed wire at dusk, leaving six standing patrols east of the barbed wire. Regimental H.Q. were at Fara East Camp. On July 2 during the tour of outpost duty, an enemy harvesting party were noted taking in the barley crop west of the Wadi Imleih. These harvesters were dispersed by machine gun firing at a range of about 3,000 yds. As it was the time of full moon, and enemy aeroplanes were very active, all lights had to be extinguished at 8 o'clock.

The next day—July 3—harvesting parties with camels and donkeys were again noted and dispersed with machine gun and Hotchkiss rifle fire at a range of 2,600 yds. At this range good observation could be made, and it was evident that the firing was effective. In the afternoon two heavy armoured cars were sent forward to engage the enemy if they showed any enterprise in advancing when our patrols were withdrawn at dusk, but the Turks were coy and did not offer any targets. Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., returned from sick leave. Lieut. R. G. Anderson arrived with a draft of 38 O.R.'s. Lieut. A. M. McGrigor sailed on leave to England.

On July 4 the Turkish outposts were found to be generally withdrawn, probably on account of the reconnaissance operations by our Corps Commander. Working and foraging parties of the enemy were observed and dispersed by machine gun fire at 2,000 yds. On July 6 the regiment provided a squadron for a composite regiment representing the yeomanry at an inspection by Gen. Allenby, who had now assumed command of the E.E.F. Our squadron was commanded by Capt. A. H. S. Howard with Lieut. Lord Apsley, M.C., second in

command. This composite regiment moved to a point near El Fukhari and was inspected on July 7.

The rest of the regiment moved with the brigade to a beach camp at Marakeb on the 6th, and the squadron which had been assigned to the composite regiment joined it the next day at Marakeb. Here the most important event of the day was the bathing parade, and the men rejoiced in the opportunity of getting again into a clean state.

A fairly lengthy stay was made in Marakeb, the High Command wishing to get the troops as fit as possible for the arduous tasks near at hand. Advantage was taken of the spell to resume training in the Hotchkiss gun, signalling, musketry, and gas drill. On July 15 a draft of 30 arrived and were taken on the strength, and on July 18 Major T. J. Longworth returned from hospital.

On July 19 there was an interruption to the pleasant spell in rest camp by reports of threatened enemy action at the end of the fast of Ramadan. The 5th Brigade were ordered to saddle up and be ready for action at once, and marched out of camp to a point near El Fukhari that evening. The marching out strength was 15 officers, 274 O.R.'s and 332 animals. There were left in camp 100 O.R.'s. The regiment bivouacked at Fukhari that evening, but fortunately the enemy demonstration proved to be a flash in the pan, and on the night of the 20th orders were received to return to Marakeb.

On the 21st a draft arrived consisting of Capt. C. E. F. Henry, 2nd Lieut. G. P. Simonds, and 38 O.R.'s. On July 24 the transport returned to the regiment from the Brigade Transport Column; strength 1 officer, 27 O.R.'s; and 52 animals. On July 25 it was announced that Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer had been awarded the D.S.O. and Lieut. Lord Apsley the Military Cross for distinguished service in the field.

On July 28 the regiment held regimental sports, which were keenly enjoyed by all ranks. The events included wrestling on horseback, a V.C. race, a harem race, a tug-

of-war mounted, and a mule race for officers. The band and pipers of the 52nd Division, by the kind permission of Major-Gen. E. B. Smith, helped to make the day enjoyable with bright music.

The month of August found the regiment still enjoying the comparative ease of Marakeb, with instructional work being continued at high pressure. In addition to the routine instructional classes there were several staff rides for the instruction of senior and junior officers. The anniversary of the war was commemorated by a special church service on August 5, when the 52nd Divisional Band played. Some leave for England was possible at this stage, and Capt. A. H. S. Howard, Lieut. F. J. Turner, Lieut. E. T. Cripps, Lieut. E. W. Squire, R.A.M.C., and Major T. J. Longworth were the lucky officers.

On August 9 a brigade horse show was held, and the winners of the various events were :

1. Warrant Officers.—Sergeants' Horses.—1, Sergt. Vines ; 2, Sergt. Waters ; 3, Sergt. Orchard.

2. N.C.O.'s and Men's Light-weight Troopers.—1, Farr.-Sergt. Morgan ; 2, Lce.-Corpl. Castle ; 3, Pte. Clarke.

3. Riding Ponies.—1, Pte. Eagles ; 2, 2nd Lieut. Townsend ; 3, Pte. Baker.

4. Mule Team and Limber.—1, Corpl. Meredith.

5. Pack Horses.—1, " A " Squadron (Pte. Watts) ; 2, " B " Squadron (Pte. Hitchings) ; 3, " D " Squadron (Pte. Mace).

6. Heavy-weight Troop Horses.—1, Sergt. Richings ; 2, Corpl. Mayo ; 3, Pte. Long.

7. Horse Team and G.S. Waggon.—1, Corpl. Archibald.

8. Pack Mules.—1, " D " Squadron (Pte. Fryer) ; 2, " B " Squadron (Pte. Williams) ; 3, " A " Squadron (Pte. Parslow).

9. Mobilisation Troop Horses.—1, Lce.-Corpl. Castle ; 2, Pte. Eagles ; 3, Lce.-Corpl. Edwards.

10. Officers' Chargers, Light-weights.—1, Capt. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave's "Spider"; 2, Major T. J. Longworth's "Marakeb"; 3, Capt. F. A. Mitchell's "Wise-acre."

11. Officers' Chargers, Heavy-weights.—1, Major C. E. Turner's "Goldlace"; 2, Lieut. Lord Apsley's "Rajah"; 3, 2nd Lieut. R. H. Wilson's "Bridgeman."

12. Best Section.—Lce.-Corpl. S. Smith.

13. N.C.O.'s and Men's Jumping.—1, S.Q.M.S. Tuckey; 2, Sergt. Orchard.

14. Officers' Jumping.—1, Major C. E. Turner's "Goldlace"; 2, Capt. F. A. Mitchell's "Proctor."

On August 14 the regiment moved with the brigade to Rafa *en route* to El Arish. On their way they were inspected by Lieut.-Gen. Sir H. G. Chauvel and Major-Gen. Hodgson. The march to El Arish, partly by the seashore, was a fairly pleasant one, though the going was heavy. El Arish was reached on August 16, and there instruction in musketry, riding, and in drill generally continued. On August 23 Gen. Allenby visited the camp. On August 29 regimental orders announced:

Lieut. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert and 2nd Lieut. A. C. Byard are seconded for duty with M.G.C. (March 7, 1917).

2nd Lieut. A. C. Byard to be Temp. Lieut., M.G.C. (June 1, 1917).

2nd Lieut. (Temp. Lieut.) F. A. Mitchell, M.C., to be A/Capt. (December 20, 1916).

The following were mentioned in Gen. Sir Archibald Murray's despatches, for gallant and distinguished conduct in the field (*London Gazette*, July 6, 1917), 2nd Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, 2nd Lieut. (Temp. Lieut.) A. A. Lord Apsley, R.Q.M.S. F. C. Brain, Sergt. W. E. Price, S.S.M. T. G. Smart, and Sergt. C. Teague.

At the end of the month Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., went to Cairo to attend a Senior Officer's Course.

During September the regiment was still at El Arish

under fairly comfortable seaside conditions and carrying on intensive training. This month Capt. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave relinquished the appointment of Adjutant on assuming command of "A" Squadron and was succeeded as Adjutant by Lieut. E. P. Butler. It was not until the end of September that the regiment left El Arish to join the Australian Mounted Division in the forward area, arriving at Gamli on October 3. The strength of the regiment on marching out was 16 officers, 497 O.R.'s, and 570 animals. The march to the forward area was carried out without incident. The going was fairly good, and as the journey was by easy stages the transport stood it very well.

On October 9 the 5th Mounted Brigade took over the outpost line from the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade, the regiments making up the 5th Mounted Brigade, taking 24 hours' tours of duty in rotation. The arrangements were very much the same as before, outposts being thrown forward during the day and falling back for the night. The reserves were allowed to off-saddle, but all troops had to be ready to move at a moment's notice, and orders were that not more than half the horses were to be watered at any one time.

On October 13 a patrol consisting of Corpl. Morgan, Ptes. Smith, Poole, and Smart had the bad luck to be lured into a trap by a Bedouin and were confronted by a force of two troops of Turkish cavalry. All were captured except Pte. Smart. Two days afterwards the regiment got its revenge for this. Under cover of darkness ambush parties were pushed forward within enemy territory, one to occupy two stone huts at Beit-Abu-Taha, another to occupy a stone hut on Pt. 720. These parties carried Hotchkiss rifles, bombs, sandbags, and shovels. After reaching their objectives the horses were sent back, and the men entrenched the houses and waited for enemy parties. Lieut. L. L. Wilkins, who, with his party, had occupied the huts at Beit-Abu-Taha, had hard luck, for no enemy came within sight. Lieut. R. H. Wilson,

who was in charge of the party at Hill 720, had better luck, for at 8 o'clock in the morning an enemy patrol of 12 men approached. They were allowed to come within a few yards of the house before fire was opened. Some horses and men were accounted for and two prisoners were captured, one of whom was wounded. The unwounded prisoner proved to be one of the party who had captured Corpl. Morgan's patrol two days before. For this exploit Lieut. R. H. Wilson was awarded the Military Cross and Sergt. B. O. Barton and Corpl. Lane were awarded the Military Medal.

On October 15 Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., returned and resumed command. On October 18 an important reconnaissance by officers of the 20th Corps was carried out and the R.G.H. furnished the advance guard. During this patrol practice in communication with aeroplanes was carried out. The reconnaissance was carried out without incident. Small parties of the enemy were seen, but showed no fight.

The mounted troops were at this stage of the campaign called upon frequently to cover reconnaissances by staff officers. This particular duty used to cause some flippant comment. It was said that the cavalry had to turn out "so that staff officers could exercise their horses and test their motor-cars in safety." But of course, this *persiflage* notwithstanding, the reconnaissance work was recognised to be of vital importance, and evidence of the careful preparation which the Commander-in-Chief was making for his forthcoming big movement. He wished before making a beginning that everyone should be as familiar as possible with the nature of the country that had to be traversed. Prospecting for possible water supplies was a further object of these staff reconnaissances.

It is a cherished privilege of officers and men in the line to be facetious at the expense of "the staff," and the staff do not mind at all. In France there used to be a fable in circulation—no one was fonder of giving it circulation than "the staff"—that there was a mutual

agreement between the Germans and ourselves that G.H.Q. on both sides were to be spared from air raids.

"The arrangement is a classic instance of our stupidity," the humorist would remark, "for the German scores both ways."

"How is that?"

"Well, his staff is spared, which is valuable to him, and our staff is spared, which is also valuable to him."

On October 18 the regiment took part in another reconnaissance in force intended to protect a staff inspection of the Beersheba defences. Some preliminary instructions regarding the attack on "Z" day were now circulated, and all ranks knew that the big movement was close at hand. Its precise direction and date were of course unknown as yet except to the High Command, but enemy spies who still managed to penetrate our lines were confident that the attack was to be on Gaza, with a feint towards Beersheba. This we learned later from enemy Intelligence reports which fell into our hands.

Special equipment to secure greater mobility had been issued to the mounted troops. As the operations were to take place in the late summer, and, it was hoped, would be concluded before the winter rains set in, blankets and greatcoats were dispensed with. Each man was provided with a pair of (officers' pattern) saddle-wallets, in which to carry three days' rations (including the iron ration) of bully beef, biscuit, and groceries, besides the few articles of clothing he was allowed to take. Two nosebags on each saddle carried 19 lbs. of grain (two days' forage on the marching scale). A third day's forage was carried in limbered G.S. waggons, three to each regiment. The divisions were, therefore, self-supporting as regards food for three days, without recourse to their divisional trains. The latter, during the subsequent operations, did not accompany their divisions, but acted as carriers between them and the advanced ration dumps established by the corps' lorry column each day. One other limbered G.S. waggon was allowed per regiment

for technical stores, cooking utensils, etc. All entrenching tools were carried on pack animals.

In order to perfect the mobility of the men it was the custom for each divisional commander to issue occasionally surprise orders for the troops to turn out ready for operations and rendezvous by brigades or regiments in stated places, where they were inspected. These orders were generally issued in the early morning, and, as no hint of them was given beforehand, they gave good practice in mobility. The times taken by each unit to turn out were noted, and everyone was keen to make the best possible showing. Ration and store waggons were packed each night, nosebags filled after the animals had had their last feed and tied on the saddles, and all harness and saddlery laid out in order behind the horses. The men's wallets were kept packed permanently, the rations in them being renewed from time to time when the old ones were consumed.

Towards the end of October the enemy began to show much greater enterprise in his reconnaissance work. He could not but know that an attack on our part was pending, and he made resolute efforts to get behind the mask of our preparations. Preparatory to the battle a line of observation, which was under the command of the G.O.C. Australian Division, was established on October 24, on the general line Esani—El Buggar—Pt. 720—Pt. 630—Bir in Bir-el-Girheir, thence west-north-west. This line was 15 miles long, and one Mounted Brigade was detailed daily as outpost brigade for a tour of duty of 24 hours. The main object of it was to deny to the enemy, from October 24 onwards, positions from which he could direct observed artillery fire on to the construction parties extending the railway from Shellal to Karm.

Previous to October 24 the 5th Mounted Brigade on outpost duty had withdrawn each night behind the wire on the Wady Ghuzze, re-occupying the forward positions each morning. The ridge El Buggar—Pt. 720—Pt. 630—Bir in Bir-el-Girheir, from which observation can be

obtained to El Gamli and Shellal, had now to be permanently occupied both by day and night by the outpost Mounted Brigade. This decision meant that the Mounted Brigade, besides "observing" from Esani to El Buggar and north-west of Bir-el-Girheir, a total distance of seven miles, must entrench itself in an outpost line of resistance from El Buggar, through Pts. 720 and 630, to Bir-el-Girheir, a distance of eight miles.

On October 23, instead of one regiment of yeomanry holding the outpost line the whole of the 5th Mounted Brigade were sent forward. The R.G.H. had a day full of incident. "A" Squadron came into touch with a squadron of enemy cavalry very early in the morning, pushed it back, and made good El Buggar ridge. One troop of "A" Squadron, under 2nd Lieut. P. H. Morgan, then moved on to occupy Hill 720. They were charged by a squadron of enemy cavalry and forced to retire on Khasif, suffering one casualty (Pte. J. Pullin, whose horse fell and he was taken prisoner). "D" Squadron was in reserve, and three troops from it, with two machine guns, under Capt. A. H. S. Howard, moved out to support, and the enemy fell back to Hill 720. Meanwhile "B" Squadron (Capt. F. A. Mitchell) made good at Hill 630, the enemy in front of them retiring. Eventually "D" Squadron joined Regimental H.Q. on Imleih Ridge. The Berkeley troop, under 2nd Lieut. H. P. Ellis, were heavily pressed by a squadron of enemy cavalry attacking from the north-east, aided by the enemy force near Hill 720. 2nd Lieut. Ellis by courageous and intelligent use of rifle and Hotchkiss gun fire with his little force held up the enemy until the Warwick Yeomanry came up in support. For gallantry in this action 2nd Lieut. Ellis (who was wounded) received the M.C. and Lce.-Corpl. Harris and Pte. Mitchell the M.M. Later "B" Squadron at Hill 630 came under heavy shell fire, and five men were wounded.

The enemy on Hill 720 were tackled at 7 o'clock. With the help of "B" Battery, H.A.C., and with a Warwick squadron operating on their left flank, "D" Squadron,

R.G.H., attacked the position and carried it without casualties. We had now established the outpost line, and the rest of the day passed without special incident. In the afternoon the Warwicks took over the outpost line and the R.G.H. moved back to the support position near Karm.

On October 24 the R.G.H. again held the outpost line and had a quiet day. On October 27 it was on duty at Gamli, ready to reinforce the outpost line in case of need. From October 28 the brigade relieved the Imperial Camel Corps on the sector Khalassa—Ghalyun—Maalaga—Abushar, the R.G.H. being near Khalassa. This was marked on the map as a "town," but consisted of one house only.

At the close of the month, when the first big step in Gen. Allenby's march of victory was taken, the R.G.H. had actually in the field 22 officers, 437 other ranks; 495 horses, and 67 other animals.

CHAPTER XVI

THE VICTORY OF OCTOBER, 1917

THE position on October 31 was that the Turkish coastal forces were holding a strongly fortified position, and consisted of the 20th and 22nd Corps and the 3rd Cavalry Division, in all about nine divisions, totalling about 50,000 rifles, 1,500 sabres, and 300 guns. The 22nd Corps had headquarters at Gaza and held the western fortifications. The 20th Corps had headquarters at Sharia and held the central fortifications. The 27th Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division were at Beersheba. The Turkish Army headquarters were near Huj. There was another Turkish force in the Jordan Valley, but it was not involved in these operations.

The British forces were as follows :

The 20th Corps (Lieut.-Gen. Sir Philip Chetwode), made up of the 10th, 53rd, 60th, and 74th Divisions, 6 siege and heavy batteries, and 32 field artillery batteries (with divisions). Total strength, 45,000.

The 21st Corps (Lieut.-Gen. Sir Edward Bulfin), made up of the 52nd, 54th, and 75th Divisions, 18 siege and heavy batteries, and 22 field artillery batteries (with divisions). Total strength, 36,000.

The Royal Flying Corps : 3 squadrons and 1 balloon wing.

Army Cavalry : The Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade, made up of the Jodhpur, Mysore, and Hyderabad Lancers.

Desert Mounted Corps (Lieut.-Gen. Sir Harry Chauvel), made up of the :

(1) Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division (Maj.-Gen. Sir E. W. C. Chaytor, N.Z.I.F.), comprising : 1st Australian Light Horse Brigade, 2nd Australian

Light Horse Brigade, New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade, 18th Brigade R.H.A. (Inverness, Ayr, and Somerset Batteries).

(2) Australian Mounted Division (Maj.-Gen. Sir H. W. Hodgson), comprising: 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade, 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade, 5th Mounted Brigade (Yeomanry), in which was the R.G.H. and 19th Brigade R.H.A. ("A" and "B" Batteries, H.A.C. 1/1st Notts. Battery).

(3) Yeomanry Mounted Division (Maj.-Gen. Sir G. de S. Barrow), comprising: 6th, 8th, and 22nd Mounted Brigades (Yeomanry), 20th Brigade R.H.A. (Berks, Hants, and Leicester Batteries).

(4) 7th Mounted Brigade (Yeomanry, with them the Essex Battery, R.H.A.).

(5) Imperial Camel Corps Brigade (three battalions and one Mountain Battery, R.G.A.).

Of the nine brigades of mounted troops the five Yeomanry brigades were armed with the sword, the rifle, and bayonet, and were trained as cavalry. The four A.L.H. Brigades and the N.Z.M.R. Brigade were armed with the rifle and bayonet only, and trained as mounted rifles.

The field of battle was eminently suitable for the decisive employment of his mounted forces which Gen. Allenby contemplated. The Turkish line of defence was on the edge of the Philistine Plain, a stretch of rolling downs averaging about 20 miles in breadth between the sea and the foothills of the Judæan Mountains. This country is traversed at frequent intervals by deep wadis cut in the soil by the torrents coming down from the mountains in the rainy season, but it has no permanent rivers. If the Turkish line could be cut and cavalry pushed through the gap the way would be open for a resolute pursuit as far at the least as the railway line from Jaffa to the Judæan hills, and communications could be cut between Jerusalem and the Turkish army on the coast. That would probably entail the fall of

Jerusalem, which could not be well defended by the other Turkish army in the Jordan Valley.

The Turkish strength in Palestine and Trans-Jordania was in effect divided into two main bodies by the line of the Judæan Mountains. The Turk was holding the Philistine Plain with the army enumerated above, the Jordan Valley and its hinterland with a practically distinct army. He was relying for his hold on Jerusalem upon the coast forces. The slopes of the mountains on the coast side were comparatively easy, and served by railway communications. On the Jordan side of the mountain chain the slopes were very steep, with no railways and with only one practicable lateral road until beyond Jerusalem.

Gen. Allenby's plan was to seize Beersheba and the high ground to the north and north-west of it by a combined attack of cavalry and infantry, thus throwing open the left flank of the main enemy position at Hareira and Sharia. After the fall of Beersheba the cavalry would be concentrated on the right flank of his army, ready to pursue the enemy when driven from the remainder of his fortified positions. The possession of Beersheba would, it was hoped, give the necessary water to enable us to maintain our cavalry on this flank until the conclusion of the second phase of the attack. After the capture of Beersheba Gen. Allenby aimed to deliver his main infantry attack against the enemy's open left flank at Hareira, and to roll up the enemy line from the east towards the sea. But so as to deceive the enemy as to the real point of the main attack, to pin him down to his positions, and to prevent him from reinforcing his left flank, an attack was to be made on the Gaza defences.

The capture of Beersheba was assigned to the 20th Corps (60th, 74th, 53rd, and 10th Divisions and Imperial Camel Corps Brigade). The Desert Mounted Corps (which included most of the mounted troops) was to co-operate, concentrating at Bir Asluj and Khalassa, and, moving out to the east and north-east, to attack

Beersheba from that quarter. It had also to protect the right flank of 20th Corps as it advanced to its attack.

On the evening of October 30 the Anzac Division was at Asluj, the Australian Division at Khalassa, the 7th Mounted Brigade at Esani, the Yeomanry Division in G.H.Q. reserve at Shellal, and the Camel Corps at North Shellal (acting as 20th Corps troops). The R.G.H. were ordered to Corps Reserve behind Iswaiwin for the following day. The main force of mounted troops, after a night march, for part of the force of 25 and for the remainder of 35 miles, arrived early in the morning of the 31st at Khasim Zanna, in the hills some five miles east of Beersheba. From the hills the line of advance into Beersheba from the east and north-east was over an open and almost flat plain.

The infantry attack on Beersheba began very early in the morning of October 31 and at the same time the various units of the Desert Mounted Corps moved in towards Beersheba from the east, south-east, and north-east. Good progress was made, especially by the mounted forces. They carried out well their rôle of disquieting the enemy by threatening his rear and by pinning down his reserves, and thus facilitating the moving forward of the infantry. But as their line of march carried them across the front of the enemy and no effective flank-guard could be provided, each brigade had to be responsible for its own flank protection, and each brigade had to be accompanied by its own transport. In effect, the various brigades acted independently, and the complete co-ordination of their movements secured under these difficult circumstances was evidence of the highest degree of efficiency, fully justifying the confidence which the High Command had in them to carry through a task which was so supremely difficult as to appear almost impossible. Throughout no error of direction was made. Everything moved like clockwork.

At 10 o'clock the New Zealand Mounted Brigade attacked Tel-el-Saba, whilst the 2nd Australian Light Horse

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Brigade attacked Bir Es Sakaty, on the Hebron road. Shortly after noon the attack on Bir Es Sakaty succeeded, and the Turks were cut off from the Hebron road. At 1 o'clock in the afternoon the attack on Tel-el-Saba, which had progressed slowly on account of the heavy machine gun fire of the enemy, also succeeded. There was now a pause in the advance owing to the great strength of the enemy's machine guns, and by 4 o'clock no further advance had been made on Beersheba. It was essential for the success of the whole plan that Beersheba should be captured that night, since our command was relying upon the water supplies in the town being available for the mounted troops that night. An order was accordingly given for the mounted troops to "rush" Beersheba. The desperate task was entrusted to the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade. This brigade, unfortunately for the purpose in hand, was trained and armed as a Mounted Rifle Brigade, and had no swords. It was a great feat of arms that, notwithstanding this fact, by using the bayonet as a substitute for the sword they carried through a dramatically successful cavalry charge which actually captured the town.

It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon when Gen. Grant, commanding the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade, received his orders. He was then six miles east-south-east of Beersheba, and an open plain stretched before him. Bayonets were drawn and held in the hand by the men, to be used as short swords, and the brigade started off at the trot, with the 12th Australian Light Horse Regiment on its left, in three successive lines, a squadron each line. The files were at 4 yds. interval, with 300 yds. distance between squadrons. The trot was soon quickened into a gallop, and successive lines of trenches were captured at the gallop. The force reached the wadi in front of Beersheba, just at the fall of dusk. After a short pause they then pushed on with a dismounted bayonet attack, taking the town and capturing nine field guns and four machine guns and about 700

prisoners, then took to their horses again and followed up the fleeing enemy through the town.

This daring and successful attack was carried through with but little loss during the cavalry charge. Its rapidity seemed to demoralise the enemy, as neither their rifle fire nor their artillery fire was at all effective. The casualties suffered by the mounted troops in the first stage were mostly sustained in jumping the broad trenches. Subsequently the dismounted bayonet charge involved heavier casualties.

At the fall of night the last of the enemy forces—two aeroplanes—left Beersheba, and, flying very low, attacked the 5th Mounted Brigade transport column. The casualties suffered then were the only losses sustained by the R.G.H. during the day.

Including those taken by our infantry about 2,000 prisoners were captured at Beersheba and over 500 Turkish corpses were found on the battleground. But the enemy had had time to effect a great deal of destruction before evacuating the town. The munition depôts, railway station buildings, and stores were set on fire, and five out of the seven wells were blown up. But fortunately a small supply of water was found in the pools around the town as the result of recent thunder showers, and that helped the water situation for a day or two.

Beersheba, which had been won by such splendid daring, proved a great disappointment. Our men had expected a town of fine houses and fair gardens and found instead miserable mud huts and general filthiness. The German propaganda papers had published articles on the beneficent work of the Germans in Palestine, illustrated with views of a wonderful Beersheba that they had created, a town of imposing buildings and flower-adorned squares. To supply material for these illustrations the Germans had laid out a public garden traversed with formal little paths and decorated with some tired shrubbery. This was labelled "Bier Garten," and

around it was a collection of buildings—Government offices, military barracks, a mosque, a hospital, an hotel, and so on. Photographs of this square were taken from every possible position, and the true Beersheba—a jumble of shoddy hovels—was concealed.

With the capture of Beersheba the first phase of the operation had been victoriously carried through, and it was decided to attack Gaza on the night of November 1. The objectives were the enemy works from Umbrella Hill (2,000 yds. south-west of the town) to Sheik Hasan, on the sea (about 2,500 yds. north-west of the town). The front of the attack was about 6,000 yds., and Sheik Hasan, the furthest objective, was over 3,000 yds. in advance of our front line. The terrain consisted of sand dunes, rising in places up to 150 ft. in height, and as the sand was loose the going was very heavy.

The attack was successful in reaching practically all its objectives. Four hundred and fifty prisoners were taken and many Turks killed. Subsequent reports from prisoners showed that one of the divisions holding Gaza was withdrawn after losing 33 per cent. of its effectives, and one of the divisions in general reserve was drawn into the Gaza sector to replace it. The attack thus succeeded in its primary object, which was to prevent any units being drawn from the Gaza defences to meet the threat to the Turkish left flank, and to draw into Gaza as large a proportion as possible of the available Turkish reserves.

Preparations were now begun for phase three, the objective of which was the enemy's left flank positions at Sharia and Hareira. This operation was delayed a little by water difficulties. But, beginning on November 1, it continued with complete success until November 7, when the enemy evacuated Gaza and fled to the north. The C.-in-C. in his despatches gave a great share of the credit of this success to the dismounted yeomanry, whom he mentions as "storming the works on the enemy's extreme left with great dash."

The rôle of the mounted troops at first was to protect

the right flank of the 20th Corps, which was concentrating for the attack on Sharia and Hareira. This entailed a great deal of hard outpost fighting in the hills north-east of Beersheba and very severe privations in regard to water supply. The surface water in the Wadi Saba did not last very long, and the wells in Beersheba were not equal to supplying both the mounted troops and the 20th Corps. The mounted brigades accordingly were given a 24 hours' tour of duty and were then relieved, going back to an area where water was available. The operations of the mounted troops, it was soon noted, were having the effect of drawing the Turkish reserves over to their extreme left. The Turks seemed to have been thoroughly frightened by our "rushing" Beersheba with a cavalry charge, and showed a great nervousness of our mounted troops as they pushed out further east. The 19th Turkish Division, the remains of the 27th (which had garrisoned Beersheba), and the whole of the 3rd Turkish Cavalry Division were drawn out to meet our extreme right. This was exactly what we wanted. It made the task of attacking Sharia and Hareira all the more easy.

The R.G.H. on November 1 moved forward from the corps reserve position and bivouacked north of the Wadi Saba, on the site of an old Turkish cavalry camp. The Turks had evidently left the place in a hurry, for the camp was littered with their equipment and saddlery, which was generally of very poor quality, but some forage they left behind proved useful. The regiment spent a quiet forenoon on November 2, but received orders in the afternoon to be ready to move under orders of the Anzac Mounted Division—to which they were now attached—when required. On November 3 at 8 o'clock the regiment accordingly turned out—strength 20 officers, 349 other ranks, 445 animals—and marched northwards along the Hebron road and joined the Worcester Yeomanry at noon at Rjm Abu Jerwan.

The 53rd Division were operating from Ain Kohleh

towards Tel Khuweilfeh, a place which the Turks were strongly holding as it commanded the water supply of the region. Our task was to protect their right flank, and from November 3 to November 6 the Ras-el-Nukb line was held in turn by the 7th Mounted Brigade, 1st A.L.H., 5th Mounted Brigade, New Zealand Brigade, and the I.C.C. Shortly after noon the brigade, less the Warwickshire Yeomanry, moved out in column of troops to the Wadi-el-Sultan, coming under heavy rifle fire on the way, but suffering no casualties. During the night the regiment held an outpost line. The night passed without incident.

On November 4 several patrols were ordered out but nothing of importance occurred. The regiment was relieved in the outpost line by the Worcestershire Yeomanry about 3 p.m. and the R.G.H. returned on foot to their horses, being heavily shelled *en route*. By careful guidance and splitting each squadron and troop into small parties when passing over ground exposed to the enemy, they suffered no casualties. This outburst of fire was a preparation by the Turks for a counter-attack, as the R.G.H. had hardly reached their horses when they received orders to return at once to support the Worcestershire Yeomanry, who were being attacked. It was bad walking over the rocky country, but when it came to galloping back under fire it was surprising to find how few horses failed to keep their feet. The quick intervention of the R.G.H. no doubt relieved the situation.

"A" Squadron, which was sent to support a Worcester Squadron on the right, did not have such severe fighting as "D." Fighting on the ridge was bitter, and Troop Leaders 2nd Lieuts. L. L. Wilkins and T. N. Inglis were both severely wounded. Their troops' commands were promptly taken over by Sergt. Pearse and Sergt. Insoll, who carried on with courage and resource that earned the highest praise.

Meanwhile the enemy's attack on "D" Squadron's position was continued with considerable vigour till

darkness came on and the enemy withdrew. Owing to the large boulders on the rough ground it was impossible to count the enemy killed, but it was clear that casualties had been considerable. On the arrival of a brigade of N.Z.M.R. the 5th Mounted Brigade was relieved and steps taken to collect casualties and convey them to the first-aid post. This work was organised by Lieut. E. Gilholme, most ably assisted by Lce.-Corpl. Searle, R.A.M.C., and Corpl. Hambling, M.L. The removal of casualties was a difficult and tedious work in the dark over the rough ground and with a shortage of stretchers. Parties were detailed to carry the wounded down to meet the sand-carts in the valley, and the force finally withdrew at 10 o'clock under orders of Lieut.-Col. H. J. Williams, D.S.O., commanding the Worcester Yeomanry, and rejoined the remainder of brigade, who had already started for Beersheba before the counter-attack took place. The camp at Beersheba was reached about 4 a.m.

Towards dusk in this action difficulty had been experienced in keeping the Hotchkiss guns in action. These guns, owing to the percussion caps being separated from the cartridges in extraction, frequently suffered from jams. The small percussion caps were very difficult to detect in the bad light, though such jams can be easily remedied by daylight. Several instances occurred where time was lost owing to the percussion caps getting into the runners and other mechanism of gun.

The following R.G.H. casualties occurred during the day: Wounded, 2 officers, 12 O.R.'s (2 since died of wounds). Horses: 2 killed, 14 wounded.

On November 5 the regiment had a welcome day's rest at Beersheba. The horses had been without water for 48 hours, and the men had been for the same time either fighting or in the saddle. The famished horses on scenting the water could not be restrained, but made a rush for the troughs, and some of the men were also suffering severely from thirst.

We heard later that the N.Z.M.R. Brigade which had

relieved us at Ras-el-Nukb had been very heavily attacked, and the Imperial Camel Corps, which relieved them, was also very bitterly attacked, the Turks evidently regarding this ridge as a key position.

By the evening of November 5 preparations had been completed to attack the Kauwukah and Rushdi systems and to make an effort to reach Sharia. The mounted troops were warned in the event of a success by the infantry to collect (they had been widely scattered owing to water difficulties) and push north in pursuit of the enemy.

At dawn on the 6th the general attack was commenced by an assault on the group of works at the extreme left of the enemy's defensive system. This attack was to be the work of the mounted troops chiefly, and during its development the London and Irish troops were to advance towards the Kauwukah system, bring forward their guns, and assault that system as soon as the artillery bombardment had proved effective, and afterwards take the remainder of the system in enfilade.

The attack was successful in capturing all its objectives, and also the whole of the Rushdi system. Sharia station was captured before dark. The yeomanry reached the line of the Wadi Sharia to Wadi Union, and the troops on the left were close to Hareira Redoubt, which was still occupied by the enemy. Some 600 prisoners were taken, and some guns and machine guns captured. Our casualties were comparatively slight. The greatest opposition was encountered by the yeomanry in the early morning, the enemy's left being strong and stubbornly defended.

The mounted troops were ordered now to take up the pursuit and to occupy Huj and Jemameh. During November 6 the R.G.H. stood to arms but were not called upon.

Meanwhile the 21st Corps had not been idle on the coast. The Gaza positions were heavily bombarded from November 3, and on the night of the 6th our infantry pushed forward and met with but slight resistance. On

the morning of the 7th it was found that the Turks had evacuated Gaza during the night. The Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade at once took up the pursuit, and two brigades of the 52nd Division also pushed their way forward along the seashore and seized the high ground north of the Wadi Hesi. The Turks evidently had hoped to hold the line of this wadi if they had to evacuate Gaza, but this prompt pursuit frustrated that intention.

On November 7 the 5th Mounted Brigade moved forward again, the R.G.H. leading, and took up a position in the vicinity of Sharia. In the afternoon enemy cavalry were observed, and the brigade moved forward in the hope of being able to charge them, but the enemy retreated.

It was plain at this point that the original plan of the High Command to have the cavalry fresh for a decisive chase of the enemy could not be followed up. The cavalry had had to be called upon for too much preliminary work. Lieut.-Col. Rex Osborne, D.S.O., M.C., comments on the position :

The Desert Mounted Corps was therefore in a position 07.30 hours on November 7, about 15 hours *after* the moment of 20th Corps success, to take up the pursuit. The Australian Mounted Division was complete, but much tired after an 18 mile night march. The Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division was not complete. The whole of the N.Z.M.R. Brigade, two squadrons and eight machine guns of 2nd A.L.H. Brigade, and Somerset Battery R.H.A. were still absent. This division, like the Australian Mounted Division, had been on the move all night, and was also tired. The 7th Mounted Brigade arrived after a night-march from Karm.

Out of the 11 brigades of the Desert Mounted Corps only six were present for the exploitation, and these toed the mark 12 hours late and were not fresh.

To all concerned this result brought bitter disappointment. After years of disappointment in France it really looked as if, at last, a real smashing example of cavalry exploitation was to be given to the world. The ideal to be attained would require that the Desert Mounted Corps—entire, rested, and in the best possible condition—should be assembled close behind the “softest” spot

at the moment of success of the main infantry attack. All that they could then ask was that the direction in which they were launched and the objectives given to them should be the most suitable.

The C-in-C. was, and is to-day, the greatest believer in the power of mounted troops to exploit the success of the other arms. His mounted troops comprised a quarter of his force. His original plan was deliberately framed to include cavalry exploitation as its final decisive act. He knew, better than anyone else in the force, that cavalry exploitation, to attain its best, demanded perfect timing, maximum numbers, and that the troops should be fresh. None of these conditions were attained. It is clear that at least one factor which affected the situation was insuperable ; owing to shortage of water it was impossible to assemble the whole cavalry corps fit and rested at the correct place and time. Further, his decision to continue with his decisive attack from the south-east against Sharia and Kauwakah, when the Karm—Shellal railway was so exposed to counter-offensive, and while the heavy counter-attacks were threatening Beersheba from the north-east, was a most daring decision ; and it is only to be greatly regretted that the mounted troops could not, apparently, be relieved earlier than they were from their protective rôles on both flanks of the 20th Corps.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PURSUIT

FROM November 8 the enemy's forces were in flight, our task was one of pursuit, and our chief problems those of transport and supply. Both water and forage were very scarce. Where water was available it was generally in deep wells, which had been wrecked as far as possible by the enemy in retiring. The watering of the horses was thus a task ranging from the tedious and difficult to the impossible.

November 8 was marked by a splendid action at Huj. We had left Sharia and rode through Barata, seeking contact with the Turks, who were fighting a rearguard action. The 60th Division were on the left and the 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade on the right. The first objective was Zuheilike, where the enemy had batteries, protected by about 2,000 infantry. The Turks did not wait for an encounter, but retired, shelling our forces heavily as they did. The brigade pressed the enemy hard, advancing at the gallop from one ridge to another for a distance of about 10 miles, rapidly gaining on the guns and passing over country strewn with dead Turks and abandoned material. Among this abandoned material were many small water barrels, which were very welcome, as we had been without water since the previous night. Soon after midday we were east of Huj and in close contact with enemy artillery. Two squadrons of Worcesters and one of Warwicks were in the advance line, and the R.G.H. were in reserve. A splendid charge with the sword carried the Turkish batteries and routed the infantry protecting the guns. The batteries were manned by German and Austrian gunners, who fought

with courage around their guns even after the Turkish infantry had retreated. Twelve guns in all were captured, three of them 5.9 howitzers and nine field guns. Lieut.-Col. the Hon. R. M. Preston, D.S.O., gives a spirited account of this action :

About 3 p.m., as the right flank of the 60th Division was approaching Huj, it came suddenly under a devastating fire at close range from several concealed batteries of enemy artillery, which, with two battalions of infantry, were covering the withdrawal of the 8th Army headquarters. The country was rather like Salisbury Plain—rolling downland without any cover—and our troops suffered severely from the murderous fire. Major-Gen. Shea, commanding the division, finding Col. Gray-Cheape of the Warwick Yeomanry close by him, requested him to charge the enemy guns at once. Col. Cheape collected a few troops of his own regiment that he had with him, and some of the Worcester Yeomanry, and led them away to the right front. Taking advantage of a slight rise in the ground to the east of the enemy position, he succeeded in leading his troops to within 800 yds. of the Turkish guns unseen. He then gave the order to charge, and the ten troops galloped over the rise and raced down upon the flank of the enemy guns. The Turks had in position a battery of field and one of mountain guns, with four machine guns, on a low hill between the two batteries, and three heavy howitzers behind.

As our cavalry appeared, thundering over the rise, the Turks sprang to their guns and swung them round, firing point-blank into the charging horsemen. The infantry, leaping on the limbers, blazed away with their rifles till they were cut down. There was no thought of surrender ; every man stuck to his gun or rifle to the last. The leading troops of the cavalry dashed into the first enemy battery. The following troops, swinging to the right, took the three heavy howitzers almost in their stride, leaving the guns silent, the gun crews dead or dying, and galloped round the hill, to fall upon the mountain battery from the rear and cut the Turkish gunners to pieces in a few minutes. The third wave, passing the first battery, where a fierce sabre *v.* bayonet fight was going on between our cavalry and the enemy, raced up the slope at the machine guns. Many saddles were emptied in that few yards, but the charge was irresistible. In a few minutes the enemy guns were silenced, their crews killed, and the whole position was in our hands.

Most of the Turkish infantry escaped, as our small force of cavalry was too scattered and cut up by the charge to be able to

pursue them, but few of the enemy gunners lived to fight again. About 70 of them were killed outright, and a very large number were wounded.

This was the first time that our troops had "got home" properly with the modern cavalry thrusting sword, and an examination of the enemy dead afterwards proved what a fine weapon it is. Our losses were heavy. Of the 170 odd who took part in the charge 75 were killed and wounded, and all within a space of 10 minutes. In this charge, as in all others during the campaign, it was noticeable how many more horses were killed than men. Apart from the fact that a horse presents a much bigger target than a man, it is probable that infantry, and especially machine gunners, when suddenly charged by cavalry, have a tendency to fire "into the brown," where the target looks thickest, which is about the middle of the horses' bodies, thus dropping many horses but failing to kill their riders. A man whose horse is brought down is, however, by no means done with, as the Turks learnt to their cost. In this, as in subsequent charges, many a man whose horse had been shot under him extricated himself from his fallen mount, and seizing rifle and bayonet, rushed on into the fight.

It is sad to have to relate that the gallant officer who led this great charge met his death subsequently—not on the field of battle, as he would have wished, but in the Mediterranean, when the transport that was taking him and his regiment to France for the final act of the war was torpedoed and sunk by an enemy submarine.

The action was of interest as an indication of what may be accomplished, under suitable conditions, by even a very small force of cavalry when resolutely led. The charge was made on the spur of the moment, with little preliminary reconnaissance of the ground, without fire support, and with the equivalent of little more than one squadron of cavalry. It resulted in the capture of 11 guns and four machine guns, and the complete destruction of a strong point of enemy resistance, at a cost of 75 casualties.

There was considerable divergence of opinion in the cavalry as to the best method to be employed in a mounted attack. As there were no reliable precedents in modern warfare, with its machine guns and quick-firing artillery, brigadiers had been given a free hand to develop the tactics they favoured, subject to the principle that fire support should always be provided if available, and that the line of fire and the direction of the mounted attack should be as nearly as possible at right angles to one another.

Prior to the operations the 5th Mounted Brigade had been practising the following method for the attack of lightly entrenched troops. A regiment charged in column of squadrons in line, with a distance of 150 to 200 yds. between squadrons. The leading squadron charged with the sword, and, having passed over the enemy position, galloped straight on to attack any supports that might be coming up. The remainder of the regiment charged without swords. The second squadron galloped over the trench while the enemy troops were still in a state of confusion, dismounted on the farther side, and attacked from the rear with the bayonet. The third squadron dismounted before reaching the trench, and went in with the bayonet from the front. Two machine guns accompanied this last squadron, and came into action on one or both flanks, as the situation demanded, to deal with any counter-attack that might develop. If more than one regiment took part in the attack the machine guns, of course, moved on the outer flanks of the regiments.

Unfortunately this brigade never had an opportunity of putting this method to the test, but the 4th A.L.H. Brigade used it in a modified form at Beersheba, with excellent results.

The wisdom of accompanying a mounted attack by one or two machine guns was generally recognised, and in most cases where a charge was made deliberately and after due preparation, and the guns were available, this method of support was employed.

Where a mounted attack had to cover a considerable distance of open ground before reaching charging distance the most usual formation was in column of squadrons in line of troop columns. Our own gunners were of opinion that this formation offered the most difficult target to artillery, provided the interval between troops was not less than 25 yds. and the distance between squadrons not less than 100 yds. The experience of the campaign seemed to point to the fact that cavalry also suffered less from machine gun fire in this formation than in any other, at any rate at ranges beyond 1,000 yds.

We bivouacked that night near the guns, and the brigade received the congratulations of the High Command for upholding in this action the highest traditions of the British cavalry.

On the night of November 8, officers were sent out to find water for the horses, but without success.

At 8.30 a.m. on November 9 the R.G.H., acting as escort to all horses and mules in the brigade, marched to Jemameh

for water, but owing to the large number of animals from other units also waiting, it appeared doubtful whether its turn would come that day at all. Consequently about 4 p.m. the Regiment was ordered to proceed still farther in search of a wadi reported to have water in it. This we found to be correct. By the time all had been watered it was dusk. Having collected the column, the compass had to be relied upon for the return march. Arriving in camp about 9 p.m., the Regiment were received with the news that the brigade was under orders to march at 12 that night with the rest of the Australian Mounted Division on to Arak-el-Menshiye and El Faluje via the Wadi Hesy. An R.G.H. officer's diary on this point :

November 9.—Had an awful night at Sharia. Water very scarce. Thousands trying to water. The horses are constantly without water for 36 hours. Water is like gold. To-day spent the most awful time from 8.30 in the morning to 9 at night watering the horses.

The one cheerful incident of that evening was the passing over the camp of 31 aeroplanes loaded with bombs destined for the retreating enemy. From the beginning of the regiment's service in Egypt and Palestine our forces had been at the mercy of the enemy aeroplanes owing to the weakness of our own Air Force, and the enemy had always devoted special attention to the mounted troops, being particularly attentive in bombing water parties. Now we were turning the tables.

To add to the troubles from lack of water, the weather was very hot and the sufferings of the unfortunate animals were intense. Previously-held ideas as to the capacity of horses to withstand thirst had to be revised in the light of the experience of this campaign, when horses frequently went for two whole days without water and yet survived. The men, who had to face the most serious hardships themselves, did their best throughout for the horses, cheerfully sacrificing their own rest in the effort to secure a drink for their mounts. It was no

mean test of discipline and devotion to duty for men who had been fighting all day to devote the whole of the night to getting water for the horses. Many of the men could not prevent going to sleep on horseback while on the march, but this probably enabled them to carry on.

I cannot refrain from quoting again Lt.-Col. the Hon. R. M. Preston, D.S.O., on this point :

Had water been available in abundance throughout the advance there is little doubt that our cavalry would have been able to overwhelm the retreating Turkish armies, and the capture of Jerusalem might then have been accomplished by a rapid raid of mounted troops. As it was, each night was spent by a large part of the cavalry in a heart-breaking search for water, that too often proved fruitless, while the enemy, moving in his own country, utilised the hours of darkness to put such a distance between his troops and their pursuers as enabled him generally to entrench lightly before our cavalry came up with him in the morning. The marching powers of the Turks are phenomenal. Time after time, after fighting all day, they would retire when darkness fell, and march all night, and repeat this performance of fighting all day and marching all night for several days in succession. During their retreat they systematically destroyed the water-lifting apparatus of all the wells they passed, thus incidentally depriving the native inhabitants of water.

The position on this date was that the original plan of the High Command to push the cavalry round to the rear of the enemy and thus capture their whole army had had to be abandoned, and we were forced to be content with a direct pursuit of his forces, inflicting as much damage as possible. The watering difficulties were most largely responsible for this. Another factor was the necessity at an earlier stage of the operations of calling the cavalry in to the assistance of the infantry in their task. If it had been possible to keep the cavalry (as had been intended) fresh for the task of pursuit, only to be called upon when the infantry had broken through, better results might have been achieved. Yet another handicap to the mounted forces was the fact that a large proportion of them, though being used as cavalry, were not armed

nor trained as cavalry. Four of the pursuing Mounted Brigades were mounted riflemen and not cavalrymen and had no swords. Gen. Wilson, commanding the 3rd A.L.H. Brigade, commenting on this, wrote :

One of the chief values of the sword is the spirit of progress that it inculcates in the carrier. He does not allow himself to be bluffed by slight opposition. He rides on feeling that he has a weapon in his hand, and in nineteen times out of twenty finds the opposition only a bluff. With the mounted rifleman, on the other hand, his only course is to make wide turning movements to induce the opposition to retire, or to dismount and try and shift it by fire action. This all means time or uncertainty, which is exactly what the enemy wants . . . dealing with a pursuing foe as we were in the Beersheba—Jerusalem operations in November, 1917. . . . There are numerous cases where the sword would have been . . . invaluable. Take the operations about Huj in November, 1917. With my late experience I can see what we could have done with the sword there. We were in touch with large bodies of the enemy, somewhat disorganised, retreating but still armed. We had no swords, and could only deal with them by fire action. Their line was too broad to out-flank. The regiments engaged them at a distance, and, when practicable, raced in and cut out guns and transport. They inflicted casualties and took prisoners, but did nothing really big. If they had had swords I am now confident from my late experiences that they would have made wholesale captures. It is not reasonable to expect mounted riflemen to charge positions mounted. It is only bluff, and if the enemy stood to it the charge could end in failure only. Such bluffs, I know, have come off, but we cannot always expect to be lucky.

On November 10 the R.G.H. were ordered to Arak-el-Menshiye, where an enemy counter-attack was threatened, and were to take up the line Es Sukriyeh—Fattaha. This was carried without opposition, and the regiment took up an observation line until the late afternoon, when they were ordered to Summeil. The enemy counter-attack did not develop in any strength. His Hebron force was clearly in a generally disorganised state and could make no effective diversion. The regiment bivouacked that night at Arak-el-Menshiye and found that water had

arrived for the men from Hesy. The horses, however, had to be sent back to Hesy to be watered. The next morning a large number of sick men and horses were evacuated. They had been marching and fighting for 14 days without cessation, and the horses had as a routine to go without water for 24 hours and more than once for 48 hours. Saddles were rarely off, and the men had not been able to wash or to change for a fortnight. Rations were also short, but in spite of all the pursuit had to be continued. The object was to reach Junction Station as early as possible, thus cutting off the Jerusalem Army. The Imperial Camel Corps was ordered to move to the neighbourhood of Tel-el-Nejile, where it would be on the flank of any counter-stroke from the hills.

The R.G.H. returned to camp from Summeil at 11.30 p.m., and on November 11 took over outpost line.

At 6.30 a.m. on November 12 the Brigade assembled at Arak Station. "D" Squadron R.G.H. supplied two officers' patrols, and the regiment formed the advance-guard, to which was attached half a section H.A.C. and one section Machine Guns, with orders to march via Summeil on Balin.

A hill was occupied to the north of Balin, from whence it was observed that our forward patrols were returning. They reported a very large body of enemy advancing.

Shortly after noon it was observed that three separate columns of the enemy were advancing from the north and north-east. "D" Squadron were then holding the right of the line, "B" Squadron was north of Balin, and "A" Squadron was west of the railway.

As it was seen that the enemy were detraining from El Tine station in considerable force, with strong artillery support, a request was sent back for reinforcements. The Worcestershire Yeomanry, less one squadron, came up in support of R.G.H. Our gun came into action against the advancing columns, and, though it caused

deployment, it did not greatly impede their progress, and in consequence of enemy guns shelling our position our gun had to go back to find a place where it would clear a ridge between it and the approaching enemy.

At first the attack from the north seemed to be fading away, but the enemy received strong reinforcements and pressed heavily from the north-east. Lieut. Wilson's troop of "D" Squadron, holding a forward salient, met the chief brunt of the attack. The troop held on with conspicuous gallantry and did not withdraw until after 3 o'clock. Several Turks were killed within 10 yds. of the position before it was evacuated. As the loss of this salient brought the hill north of Balin under enfilade fire when Lieut. Wilson's troop retired, orders were given to the rest of the line to withdraw to a ridge about three-quarters of a mile behind the one occupied, but the enemy were held back whilst our wounded were evacuated. Capt. O. Teichman, D.S.O., M.C., of the R.A.M.C., gives in his *Diary of a Yeomanry M.O.* a graphic account of his experience on this day :

Our regimental dressing-station was established in a stone-walled camel-yard in the highest part of the village and soon contained many wounded. After a time we noticed that all troops were coming down from the northern slopes and were streaming away to the north-east. From our position in the village we at the dressing-station could see through our glasses considerable numbers of the enemy detraining at El Tine station, and realised that very strong reinforcements were coming up against us. This seemed to be the great danger, as we, a weak brigade, were ahead of our main body, while the Turks, with a working railway behind them, could bring up large reinforcements and guns at short notice. Our battery shelled these reinforcements from the south of Balin, but were completely outgunned by the enemy's heavy artillery. On one occasion our H.A.C. battery galloped into the open to the left of the hills, and came into action in full view of the enemy. After being busy in our dressing-station for some time we came out to see how things were going, and were horrified to see strange-looking turbaned troops coming down over the ridge which a short time ago had been occupied by our yeomen. In the distance we could see our men retreating on the

right. The enemy, who were beginning to descend the steep declivity, were only some 300 yds. away. Luckily we had kept the horses on which the wounded had been brought in, so, realising that escape was a matter of seconds, we hastily mounted all our casualties and galloped them out of the rear of the yard. There were, however, not enough horses to go round, and some of us had to escape on foot. Some horses were shot and came down, but luckily all the wounded managed to escape after galloping about two miles, the horses bearing the serious casualties being led by men who were slightly wounded. This was an occasion when we profited from the many practices and competitions we had carried out in carrying wounded out of action by various methods. Some of us who had no horses to ride had a strenuous and exciting time on foot. As we looked back we could see that some Turkish cavalry were following the infantry, and we knew that when the former got to the bottom of the declivity and were able to gallop they would easily catch us up. As we ran we felt that we were under a heavy rifle fire, and more horses were hit. After running about a mile two of us came across a couple of riderless horses, mounted, and managed to gain the crest of the hill held by our own men and comparative safety. There were some fine rescues on that day, and a few moments after we had gained the ridge an R.A.M.C. corporal, attached to the Gloucester Yeomanry, came galloping in from another direction under a hail of bullets, carrying an unfortunate yeoman, who had lost his foot, on the front of his saddle.

It appeared that our brigade, in their advance beyond Balin, had unwittingly bumped into a very strong counter-offensive, and had found themselves up against thousands of Turkish infantry with guns which had been sent down the railway from Jerusalem. Before the action had commenced in the morning a troop of Gloucester Yeomanry, with a Hotchkiss gun, had reconnoitred near El Tine station, and, taking cover behind a thick cactus hedge, had watched the enemy detraining. While so engaged a large Turkish staff motor-car containing two Turkish Generals had passed within about 50 yds. of the yeomen's hiding-place, and the latter had riddled car and Generals with their Hotchkiss gun. Needless to say, after this performance the yeomen rejoined their regiment as fast as possible. On this day the Gloucester Yeomanry lost, amongst others, two gallant officers.

Again there was on this day reason to complain of the small arm ammunition causing the Hotchkiss gun to jam and be out of action at critical moments.

R.G.H. casualties for the day, in addition to the officers mentioned (Capt. the Hon. E. J. B. Herbert and Lieut. R. G. Anderson), were six O.R.'s killed and 13 wounded.

The regiment withdrew to Ijseir in the evening and bivouacked there for the night. Water was available to fill water bottles, but there was no issue of rations nor of forage. Several of the men and many of the horses were exhausted, and many of the latter had to be shot.

At noon Nov. 13 the brigade was relieved by 7th Mounted Brigade. The relief was a tedious business, as the troops concerned had to cross a mile in the open under enemy fire and were only allowed to move in groups of two or three at a time. The regiment moved back to Hatte, crossing the plain under heavy shell fire from the Turkish artillery. At Hatte rations and drinking water were available for the men, but the horses still had to go without water. From Hatte the regiment moved on to Es Suafir—Esh Sherkiye. "A" Squadron managed to get water at a Jewish village near by—the first water for some of the horses for 48 hours. This Jewish village was one founded under the Rothschild Colonisation Scheme and was the first sign of European civilisation that most of the men had seen since leaving Egypt. The village had not been looted by the Turks (who seem to have treated the Jewish colonies well) and it was possible to obtain supplies of bread, fruit, and poultry. During November 15 the regiment remained in camp.

Extracts taken from the diary of the officer previously quoted give a vivid picture of the hardships both men and horses were suffering at this time :

November 13.—Horses are nearly done (watering). Men hungry and tired but cheerful as usual. Half rations yesterday, none today. Open, rolling country, rather hot. Flies bad round the villages. A yeoman observed he couldn't see "why the Bible made such a rattle about this country." I haven't seen my feet for days and have not had my clothes off for a week.

November 15.—We spent all day yesterday watering 90 horses. Only one bucket apiece. The night before last they had their

first water for 56 hours. Horses have gone for three days without water. It is a wonderful sight to march along a line the enemy has retired upon. Dead men, aeroplanes, burnt guns, ammunition lying about.

Leaving the regiment for the moment and glancing at the general position : progress on November 10 and 11 was generally slow. On November 12 a pause was made preparing for an attack the next day on the enemy's position covering Junction Station. Our forces were now operating at a distance of some 35 miles in advance of their rail-head, and the bringing up and distribution of supplies and ammunition was the chief difficulty. The routes north of the Wadi Hesy were found to be hard and good going, though there were some difficult wadi-crossings ; but the main road through Gaza and as far as Beit Hanun was sandy and difficult.

On November 13 the enemy's force, estimated at about 20,000, was on a front of 20 miles, the right half of it about five miles in front of the Ramleh Junction Station Railway and roughly parallel to it. A general attack upon it was completely successful except that the infantry did not quite reach Junction Station, but that was remedied the next morning. Gen. Allenby sums up this phase of the campaign :

The enemy's army had now been broken into two separate parts, which retired north and east respectively, and were reported to consist of small scattered groups rather than formed bodies of any size.

In 15 days our force had advanced 60 miles on its right and about 40 miles on its left. It had driven a Turkish Army of nine infantry divisions and one cavalry division out of a position in which it had been entrenched for six months, and had pursued it, giving battle whenever it attempted to stand, and inflicting on it losses amounting probably to nearly two-thirds of the enemy's original effectives. Over 9,000 prisoners, about 80 guns, more than 100 machine guns, and very large quantities of ammunition and other stores had been captured.

CHAPTER XVIII

WE REACH JERUSALEM

THE mounted troops by the evening of November 15 had captured Ramleh and Ludd, taking some prisoners and war material, and Jaffa surrendered without opposition on the evening of November 16. The situation as described by Gen. Allenby was then :

The enemy's army, cut in two by the capture of Junction Station, had retired partly east into the mountains towards Jerusalem and partly north along the plain. The nearest line on which these two portions could re-unite was the line Tul Keram—Nablus. Our mounted troops had been marching and fighting continuously since October 31 and had advanced a distance of 75 miles as the crow flies from Asluj to Jaffa. After the heavy fighting at Gaza they had advanced in nine days a distance of about 40 miles, with two severe engagements and continual out-post fighting.

The railway was being pushed forward as rapidly as possible and every opportunity was taken of landing stores at points along the coast, but the landing of stores was dependent on a continuance of favourable weather, and might at any moment be stopped for several days together, as the winter season was now approaching.

A pause was therefore necessary to await the progress of railway construction, but before our position in the plain could be considered secure it was essential to obtain a hold of the one good road which traverses the Judæan range from north to south, from Nablus to Jerusalem.

The west side of the Judæan range consists of a series of spurs running east and west, and separated from one another by narrow valleys. These spurs are steep, bare, and stony for the most part, and in places precipitous. Between the foot of the spurs of the main range and the coastal plain is the low range known as the Shephelah.

On our intended line of advance only one good road, the main Jaffa—Jerusalem road, traversed the hills from east to west.

For nearly four miles, between Bab-el-Wad ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Latron) and Saris, this road passes through a narrow defile, and it had been damaged by the Turks in several places. The other roads were mere tracks on the side of the hill or up the stony beds of the wadis, and were impracticable for wheeled transport without improvement. Throughout these hills the water supply was scanty without development.

That, however, was a very modest estimate of the task ; its modesty is admirable, written as it was after the task had been done. But one may be sure that Gen. Allenby felt on November 16 that what he was asking of his troops —“ to obtain a hold of the one good road . . . from Nablus to Jerusalem ”—bordered on the impossible, and that only the very highest confidence in their skill, courage, and endurance warranted him in making the demand. He had available the mounted troops, who had been carrying on a long and strenuous pursuit with constant fighting, and one corps (two divisions) of infantry. His other infantry divisions were more or less in the rear and held up for lack of transport. The advance troops were 40 miles ahead of the rail-head. They were in summer kit and the winter was coming on. The objective to be carried was the Pass of Bab-el-Wad, which had defied in the past many great armies ; and the Turk is known to be a most wonderful fighter when he has a strong position to sit down in. (Plevna and Chatalja are two modern examples ; I saw him at Chatalja make all the attacks of Gen. Radno Demetriefff's hitherto victorious Bulgarian Army look feeble and ridiculous.)

Of course Gen. Allenby decided wisely. His troops *could* do the almost impossible. If he had not pushed on and won the keys of the pass when he did it is possible, if not probable, that his army would never have won through, for soon after he was to be stripped of some of his best troops and had to organise almost another army.

Summarising the general progress from the 16th to

the 21st, the mounted troops by the 18th had reached to Beit-ur-el-Tahta and Shilta. On the 19th the infantry moved forward and captured Latron and Amnas, and cleared the defile up to Saris, the enemy fighting strong rearguard actions. On the 20th the infantry captured Kuryet-el-Enab and Beit Dukka while the mounted troops pushed on to within four miles of the Nablus—Jerusalem road in front of Beitunia, and the next day gained two miles after bitter fighting, but in face of a strong counter-attack had to fall back to Beit-ur-el-Tahta.

During the 22nd and the 23rd, attempts by the infantry to advance farther were checked by the enemy, and a pause followed in our attacks to consolidate the positions we had won in the passes and to bring up artillery to support the next attack.

The R.G.H. on November 16 moved to the banks of the Wadi Sukarier, about two miles from the sea and about 15 miles north of Askalon. On this march the regiment was moving on the track of the pursuit of the 52nd Division, and came across very many Turkish dead. There was ample water and also some grazing.

On November 17 the regiment moved forward and eastward at dawn and took up an observation line Termus—Tine—Kezaze. The station at El Tine was the junction for the railway lines to Gaza and Beersheba, and there was found there a great accumulation of enemy stores.

On November 18 the regiment was attached to the 21st Corps and was ordered to take up an observation line, roughly the same as its outpost line of the previous day. Headquarters of the regiment were at El Tine railway station. During the 19th the regiment remained at El Tine, and on the 20th received orders to rejoin the 5th Mounted Brigade at Enab. Moving off at 10.30, the regiment marched along the Jerusalem Junction Station road to Latron. Here the regiment got into touch with brigade headquarters and was ordered to return to Junction Station and report to the 3rd Brigade. The

regiment bivouacked at Latron. The winter rains had now commenced, and a torrential downpour gave to men and horses more water than they appreciated.

On November 21 the regiment was temporarily split up. "D" Squadron (Capt. Howard) went to Desert Corps H.Q., "B" Squadron provided an escort for prisoners, "A" Squadron and the regimental H.Q. reported to the 3rd A.L.H. Brigade bivouacked near Junction Station. (The 3rd A.L.H. Brigade moved to El Mejdal and "A" Squadron was attached to help the sappers' work on the Julis road.) On November 22 "B" Squadron was relieved by a squadron of Worcester Yeomanry and on November 23 the R.G.H., less "D" Squadron, joined the 3rd A.L.H. Brigade at El Mejdal. The regiment remained at El Mejdal during November 24, 25, and 26.

On November 27 the 3rd A.L.H. Brigade, including R.G.H., moved on to Deiran, a march of 24 miles. On the afternoon of the 28th the regiment moved up to Berfilya, a distance of 14 miles. The next afternoon they moved on to El Burj and prepared for dismounted action, the horses being sent back to Deiran. The strength of the regiment dismounted was 8 officers, 120 O.R.'s. The regiment was detailed as support for the 3rd Brigade, having the 8th A.L.H. on its right and the 9th A.L.H. on its left.

The enemy was now making desperate attempts to drive us off the high ground north and north-east of Jaffa, and on the nights of the 29th and 30th organised heavy counter-attacks. The R.G.H. during the night of November 30–December 1 had to meet a particularly desperate effort of the enemy to break through which opened at 1 o'clock in the morning of December 1. Early in the day 2nd Lieut. H. P. Ellis was killed, while his troop was gallantly filling a gap in the 8th A.L.H. line. Later Lieut. G. V. Hawtrey and Lieut. E. G. Townsend went forward with their troops to fill another gap, and the help of this R.G.H. detachment was

acknowledged as of great use in helping to drive back the determined attacks of the Turks.

Later a company of the Royal Scots Fusiliers came up as reinforcements and that Turkish attack was driven off, but bitter fighting continued, and shortly after 4 o'clock in the morning the Turks made another very determined attack, which also failed completely. When dawn came the Turks found that it was impossible for them to retreat, and what remained of the force surrendered. The unwounded prisoners consisted of 4 officers (including a brigade commander), 2 cadets, and 105 O.R.'s. There were also 19 wounded prisoners. The dead were very numerous, over 200 being buried in front of the ground held by the Australian Light Horse, the R.G.H., and the Royal Scots Fusiliers. One of the prisoners stated that his force was the 90th Regiment, 1st Company, Storm Troppen Brigade, and had come recently from the Galicia front, and this was practically their first action on the Palestine front.

The enemy continued to shell the position at intervals throughout the day, the angle of fire denoting the direction in which their guns were being withdrawn.

During the morning the G.O.C. A.M.D. visited the regiment and expressed his satisfaction in the regiment's work, and the men were greatly pleased to hear of a congratulatory message received from the G.O.C., 20th Corps. Had the enemy been successful in their assault on the hill they would have been in a position to place their guns so as to enfilade the road referred to above that was used for the supply of rations, etc.

In the evening the R.G.H. were withdrawn into the support line. Our casualties were 2nd Lieut. H. P. Ellis, Lce.-Corpl. Baker, and Pte. Cox killed, and 2 O.R.'s wounded.

The next few days were spent in comparative quietness as the regiment did not take active part in the attack which brought us to the gates of Jerusalem, but the weather was fiendish. From December 7 to December 10

rain was almost incessant and the hills held by the regiment were swept by cold winds. The roads became almost impassable for the motor transport, and rations were almost always scanty. The horses and those in charge of them on the plain below had almost as bad a time as the men in the hills. The plain became a sea of mud, and the wadis, filled with mud and water, became indistinguishable from the rest of the country, and were death-traps for the unwary.

There was a peculiar mud on the hills which stuck to the mens' boots like cement. A yeoman was heard to remark that he now understood why the inhabitants of olden times, as related in the Bible, made such a rattle about taking their boots off before they entered each other's houses.

December 10 was the first clear, warm day, and for the first time for three days the men were able to dry their clothes and blankets. Yet all ranks remained cheerful, though their clothing was summer pattern, their rations slender, and their shelter *nil*. Few reported sick. A high spirit of confidence permeated all. Were they not on the threshold of Jerusalem?

Indeed, that outburst of sun on December 10 might have been a sign of joy from the heavens that Jerusalem was once again in Christian hands. On December 9 the Holy City, surrounded on all sides by our troops but scarred by no shell nor stained with the blood of battle, surrendered peacefully, and the inhabitants welcomed the British as deliverers.

The British people have no place in their minds for religious intolerance. More perhaps than any other people of the world they have a sincere respect for whatever form the aspiration towards God takes in the human heart. In their world-wide Empire, which has more non-Christian than Christian inhabitants, there is the fullest religious liberty. To be not only just but reverent towards the religious views of Moslems, Buddhists, Jews, Pagans, is part of their innate character as well as of

their policy. Regarding Jerusalem, they recognise that it was, and is, a Holy City for Moslems and Jews as well as for Christians. The Moslems find there shrines of Abraham and Isaac and others who are great prophets of the Koran as well as of the Old Testament. The Jews revere it as the old central shrine of their religion. But, with all due tolerance to other religions, Christianity must claim Jerusalem as especially its city. There the Divine Messenger brought to humanity the clearest and noblest call from God, and died to make that call manifest. Centuries ago some of the noblest blood of Western Europe was shed to recover Jerusalem for Christian keeping. In particular did English chivalry give of its dearest lives for the rescue to the Cross of the shrines of the Cross. Now, after six hundred years, Jerusalem came back to Christianity, never again to be under any banner but a Christian one unless by such faithless abandonment as can be hardly thought of as possible.

Accounts from within the city collected by the *Palestine News* showed that on the morning of December 8 large numbers of the inhabitants, with the various religious chiefs who remained in Jerusalem, were personally warned by the police to be ready to leave at once. Jemal Pasha, when told by telegram that no vehicles were available for the transport of these exiles to Shechem or Jericho and asked for transport, telegraphed curtly that they must walk. The record of other evacuations has shown that a population of all ages suddenly turned out to walk indefinite distances under Turkish escort is exposed to outrage and hardship which prove fatal to most of them ; but the day's delay in asking for instructions saved the population. The Turks' power to enforce an evacuation of the civilians ended that day.

Towards evening British troops were reported to be within sight of the city. On this news being received a sudden panic fell on the Turks west and south-west of the town, and at 5 p.m. civilians were surprised to see

a Turkish transport column galloping furiously cityward along the Jaffa road. In passing they alarmed all units within sight or hearing, and the wearied infantry arose and fled north, bootless and without rifles, never pausing to think or to fight. Some were flogged back into the ranks by their officers and picked up their arms ; others straggled on in the wild confusion of a disorderly retreat.

A great joy sprang up among the Jewish inhabitants. There was a running to and fro ; daughters called to their fathers and brothers concealed from the police in out-houses, cellars, and attics. " The Turks are running," they called. " The day of deliverance has come ! "

Towards midnight the Governor of Jerusalem, Izzet Bey, went personally to the telegraph office, discharged the staff, and smashed the instruments with a hammer. At 2 o'clock on Sunday tired Turks began to troop through the Jaffa gate from the west and south-west, and anxious watchers, peering out through windows to learn the meaning of the tramping, were cheered by the sullen remark of an officer, "*Gitmaya mejbürüz*" (" We've got to go "). From 2 o'clock until 7 o'clock that morning the Turks streamed through and out of the city. The flight of the Turks coincided with the Jewish festival of the Hanukah, which commemorates the recapture of the Temple by Judas Maccabæus in 165 B.C.

The Governor was the last civil official to depart. He left in a cart belonging to Mr. Vester, an American resident. He left behind him a letter of surrender, which the Mayor, as the sun rose, accompanied by a few frightened policemen holding tremulous white flags, set forth to deliver to the British commander.

The last Turkish soldier is said to have left Jerusalem at about 7 o'clock by the east gate of the city, which is named after St. Stephen, but later than that armed stragglers were still trickling along the road just outside the north wall, requisitioning food and water at the point of the bayonet.

As the Turkish flood finally ebbed away the townsfolk took to looting, even stripping roofs, doors, and floors from the Ottoman barracks next to the Tower of David for firewood. This disorder ceased on the appearance of the British infantry.

On December 11 the Commander-in-Chief, followed by representatives of the Allies, made a formal entry into Jerusalem. He went on foot, with no trappings of State, as a humble palmer rather than a conqueror. In striking contrast his entry to that, a few years before, of the then Kaiser of Germany with a melodramatic pomp which made most of the Christian world inclined either to sorrow or to scoff. The historic Jaffa Gate was opened after years of disuse for Gen. Allenby, and he was thus enabled to pass into the Holy City without making use of the gap in the wall made for the German Kaiser in 1898.

By this entry of Gen. Allenby into Jerusalem an old Arab prophecy was fulfilled that when the Nile had flowed into Palestine (as it did through our pipe line!) the prophet (Al Nebi) from the west should drive the Turk from Jerusalem. The inhabitants mustered courage to gather in great crowds. Those who were eye-witnesses of all three events state that the crowd gathered at the Jaffa Gate to greet Gen. Allenby was larger than that which met the German Emperor when on his fantastic political pilgrimage, and denser than the gathering which greeted the revival of the Ottoman Constitution when it was proclaimed, ten years later, at the Damascus Gate. Many wept for joy. Priests were seen to embrace one another. The General entered the city on foot, and left it on foot, and throughout the ceremony no Allied flag was flown.

A proclamation, announcing that order would be maintained in all the hallowed sites of the three great religions, which were to be guarded and preserved for the free use of worshippers, was read in English, French, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Russian, and Italian from the

terrace to the entrance to the citadel below the Tower of David. When this was done the chief notables and ecclesiastics of the different communities who had remained in Jerusalem were presented to Gen. Allenby. After this brief ceremony the Commander-in-Chief left the city by the Jaffa Gate.

In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem there was no fighting on this day apart from an attack by a small party of Turks near Tel-el-Ful, which was repulsed by the 179th Brigade. In the 21st Corps area the 75th Division advanced its front to the line Midieh—Kh. Hamid—Budrus—Sheik Obeid Rahil, meeting with slight opposition in the process. An enemy counter-attack, after preliminary bombardment of the Zeifizfiyeh Ridge at 10 o'clock, was repulsed.

On December 12 the 53rd Division improved its position by advancing several hundred yards, but there was otherwise little activity on either side. The 3rd A.L.H. Brigade relieved the 4th A.L.H. Brigade in the Suffa—Kh.-ed-Daty sector of the line.

But the enemy did not accept the loss of Jerusalem without making a desperate effort at recovery. This was anticipated, and it was while our High Command were making preparations for advancing our line for the greater security of Jerusalem and Jaffa that the enemy counter-attack developed.

As a preliminary to this advance a great deal of work had to be done in improving communication and building up supplies and ammunition. This was interfered with a great deal by heavy rains, which not only made the going very difficult but flooded the wadis, which had now become rivers, and made them almost impassable. The crossing of the Nahr-el-Auja by the 52nd Division on the night of December 20-21 was a fine operation. The enemy was taken completely by surprise, the division crossing in three columns, the left column fording the river near its mouth and the centre and right columns crossing on rafts. All three columns established



JERUSALEM—THE OLD TEMPLE SITE

themselves on the other side by bayonet charges. Gen. Allenby in his despatches commented on this, and states :

The successful crossing of the Nahr-el-Auja reflects great credit on the 52nd (Lowland) Division. It involved considerable preparation, the details of which were thought out with care and precision. The sodden state of the ground, and, on the night of the crossing, the swollen state of the river, added to the difficulties, yet by dawn the whole of the infantry had crossed. The fact that the enemy were taken by surprise, and that all resistance was overcome with the bayonet without a shot being fired, bears testimony to the discipline of this division. Eleven officers, including two battalion commanders, and 305 other ranks, and 10 machine guns were captured in this operation.

December 22 was marked by a fresh advance on the part of the 54th Division along the coast line, which gave us more freedom for using Jaffa as a port.

The enemy counter-attack did not develop until the night of December 26-27. He came on with great determination across the Jerusalem—Nablus road, but we were quite ready for him, and his counter-attack was met promptly by an attack on his right flank. At only one point did the enemy succeed in reaching our main line of defence, and he was driven out of this at once by the local reserves. By the night of December 28 the force of the Turkish attack was spent, and our forces moved forward in a general advance northwards. By the evening of December 30 not only had the Turkish attempt to recapture Jerusalem been defeated crushingly, but we had bettered our position along a front of 12 miles by a depth of from three miles to six miles. Over 1,000 Turkish dead were buried by us, 750 prisoners were taken, and, most important of all, we had now a far better position to cover Jerusalem and the port of Jaffa.

For the R.G.H. holding their post on the hills near Shilta these days of December were dull. There was plenty of work to do with guards and reconnaissances, but prudence suggested another task—the building of

stone sangars to be held as forts in case of an attack. This work was carried on from December 13 and was warmly approved by the Divisional Commander and the O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade and the chief staff officer of the 20th Corps when they visited the line on December 17 and 18.

By December 19 quite a strong fort had been constructed and the strength of its "garrison" was 7 officers, 110 O.R.'s ("D" Squadron was detached), with one section 19th M.G. Squadron under Lieut. Parker. On December 20 Lieut. R. H. Wilson and 43 O.R.'s from "D" Squadron arrived, having been relieved from escort duty at Desert Corps Headquarters. On December 24 the 4th A.L.H. Brigade relieved the 5th Mounted Brigade, which went into divisional reserve, the R.G.H. being west of Suffa.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were miserably wet. The supply system was hopelessly disorganised, as railway lines had been washed away, roads made impassable, and the camel transport broke down, the animals dying in large numbers. It was then that the donkeys, with their neat pack-saddles, were called into requisition, and admirable service did they render to the troops later in the campaign.

The R.G.H. were on the side of a rocky hill near Suffa ; in fact, you had to get a ledge where best you could to erect your bivouac. Some thought it warm lower down, but the wiser went nearer the top. Those below soon found out their error, for after it had poured with rain quite a short time the small dribbles soon became young waterfalls, which paid no respect to anyone's bivouac if it came in their way on their downward journey.

The O.C. 8th A.L.H., next to whom R.G.H. were in the line, most kindly provided them with some candles and cigarettes, as those sent from the base arrived in a sodden and unsmokeable condition. Everyone was soaked and there was no chance of drying until rain ceased and the sun

reappeared. Fortunately there was an issue of rum, and it "went well" after 24 hours' continuous wetting. All the men kept as cheerful as they might have been round a log fire, and when the sun did dry them again the unpleasant experience of Christmas, 1917, was soon forgotten.

The R.G.H. after all did not have quite so miserable an experience on Christmas Day as one party of yeomen, which, making its way northwards from Esdud, reached the bridge over the Nahr Suker about midday. The men halted to feed their horses on the bridge, which consisted of a single high stone arch, and was comparatively dry. After half an hour's halt they attempted to continue their march, but found the country to the north of the river so deep in water and mud that they could not get on. They then tried to go back again, but, in the meantime, the waters had risen behind them, and they found themselves cut off on the bridge, now a small island in a sea of muddy water. Marooned on their tiny island, lashed by the rain and the bitter wind, they spent the night and the next day (Christmas Day) huddled miserably together, without food, fire, or shelter! On the 26th the water subsided a little and they were able to struggle back to their camp. An extract from *The Diary of a Yeomanry M.O.* gives a picture of the misery suffered by the yeomanry with the led horses on Christmas Day, 1917:

Many of us will never forget Christmas Day, 1917!

We woke to find the usual inky sky and pouring rain. The latter had been falling heavily throughout the night, and the plains to the south resembled a great lake, with the hill village of Yebna apparently rising from the waters. About 10 a.m. the whole of the horses and transport belonging to our brigade left camp and proceeded towards Yebna. I soon found that the waggons of the Field Ambulance were unable to follow the route traversed by the rest of the brigade, so arranged with my transport sergeant to find an alternative track. We crossed several small torrents, which appeared suddenly, while the rain fell in buckets and the streams from the hills were rapidly inundating

the plain. We followed what in dry weather was called a road, keeping the track for the railway on our left. After passing through miles of standing water, at the bad places having to put in six or eight mules to a light waggon instead of four, the road became impassable, the mud reaching above the axles. We determined to turn back and try the sand dunes towards the sea, but by this time the water had risen in that direction and we thought we should never get out. Eventually, however, it was managed, in one case it being necessary to use 12 mules at a time to move a waggon, which was partly submerged, and unfortunately would not float. We halted our unit about a mile from Kubeibeh village, the tired horses refusing to face the stinging rain. On reconnoitring we found the Warwicks crossing a swollen wadi, which had washed away the railway, and whose presence could not be discovered, as it was part of a great lake, until a horseman who was riding through two or three feet of water became suddenly submerged. It was an extraordinary sight; several horses were swimming, and also men, some of the former disappearing altogether and being drowned in the swift current. The fact that each man was leading four horses made things worse. We rode along to look for a crossing lower down, but the water was rapidly rising, the stream being now a quarter of a mile across. I knew that four or five feet of water with an unknown amount of mud underneath would mean the loss of all my waggons, which would probably be carried away by the swiftly flowing stream to the sea. On consulting my map it was discovered that the wadi in question was described as dry! Meanwhile the three regiments, after crossing the first flood, had found another impassable river beyond. They were on an island, and the water was rapidly rising. Accordingly they recrossed to our side, after several immersions and much swimming, leaving several abandoned limbers in the stream. The large stream which they had encountered appeared to be the Wadi Shellal, also marked as a dry watercourse! At this time one could actually see the water rising as the streams kept roaring down from the hills. Personally I gave it up as a bad job, and pitched our camp on a hill on which was situated the ancient tomb of Neby Kunda, behind Kubeibeh village. The rest of the brigade rode on and tried a ford below the village. Some of the Worcesters got over after swimming their horses, and the rest, realising the danger of the rising water, remained on our side. Here we were at 7 p.m., Yebna only $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, but two rapidly rising rivers between it and us. Food and forage were at Yebna, and there was none behind us. We knew that communication with Deiran was impossible, as by this time the track by which we had come

during the day must have been entirely under water. Luckily each man carried two days' rations, but they, of course, were soaked, as most of us had been partly or wholly submerged.

We had several men who collapsed after prolonged immersion in the water and who had to be resuscitated. Surrounding the tomb of Neby Kunda we found a considerable number of olive trees, and I committed the unpardonable sin of ordering my men to cut these down for firewood, contrary to all regulations. There were very strict orders against cutting fruit-bearing trees for firewood, but in this case I felt that we were justified. What made my action seem worse was the fact that these trees were growing on holy ground. The rain continued to come down in sheets, but we, although wet through, managed to get some shelter under the waggon. Luckily I had got about 30 litres of the native port wine which we had bought for our postponed Christmas festivities, and was able to issue it to the men with their evening meal. The former worked out at half a pint per man, and in spite of their miserable, wet condition it actually made them break into song as they sat round the sizzling fire in the pouring rain. At midnight the deluge still continued, and one began to wonder what would happen if the floods rose still further on the morrow.

During the early morning of December 26 the rain abated, and at 7 a.m. a little blue sky could be seen. One realised that if it stopped raining for a few hours the floods would disappear as rapidly as they came. After breakfast a friend from the Gloucester Yeomanry came round and said that the floods had subsided and that it might be possible for our unit to reach Yebna. We rode out about two miles through water about a foot deep, and found that the worst crossings were now only about four feet deep. An hour later we brought all the transport out, and eventually, with the loss of the contents of one waggon, successfully negotiated all the crossings and entered Yebna by the old stone bridge over the Wadi Katrah. The camels were very awkward, and when they fell down in about four feet of water we had great difficulty in preventing them from drowning. The narrow streets of Yebna were themselves under water, and very congested with transport. Our Maltese cart on one occasion became completely submerged in what must have been in summer time merely a depression of the road, and it took many teams of mules, after the cart had been located by feeling for it, to pull it out. About midday we reached our camping ground, a mile south of the town, between the Warwicks and the Gloucesters. Reinforcements had arrived from Esdud (Ashdod) and we despatched waggons to draw supplies from that place.

On December 26 orders were received by the R.G.H. to move into a position of readiness north of Suffa. An observation line was taken up and held during December 27 without incident. The rest of the month was chiefly marked by road-making fatigues, and on December 31 the regiment was relieved by the 29th Brigade and moved to an assembly point south of El Burj to await there the arrival of the horses and then to march on to Yebna.

The effective strength of the regiment in the field on this date was 19 officers, 401 O.R.'s, 403 horses, 42 mules, and 17 donkeys, and the strength of the regiment (with unit in the field) was 15 officers, 373 O.R.'s, 381 horses, 42 mules, and 15 donkeys.

Between October 31 and the end of December, the Desert Mounted Corps had advanced some 80 miles, fought nine general engagements, and captured about 9,500 prisoners and 80 guns.

So the year closed with Jerusalem taken and the first phase of Gen. Allenby's campaign gloriously successful.

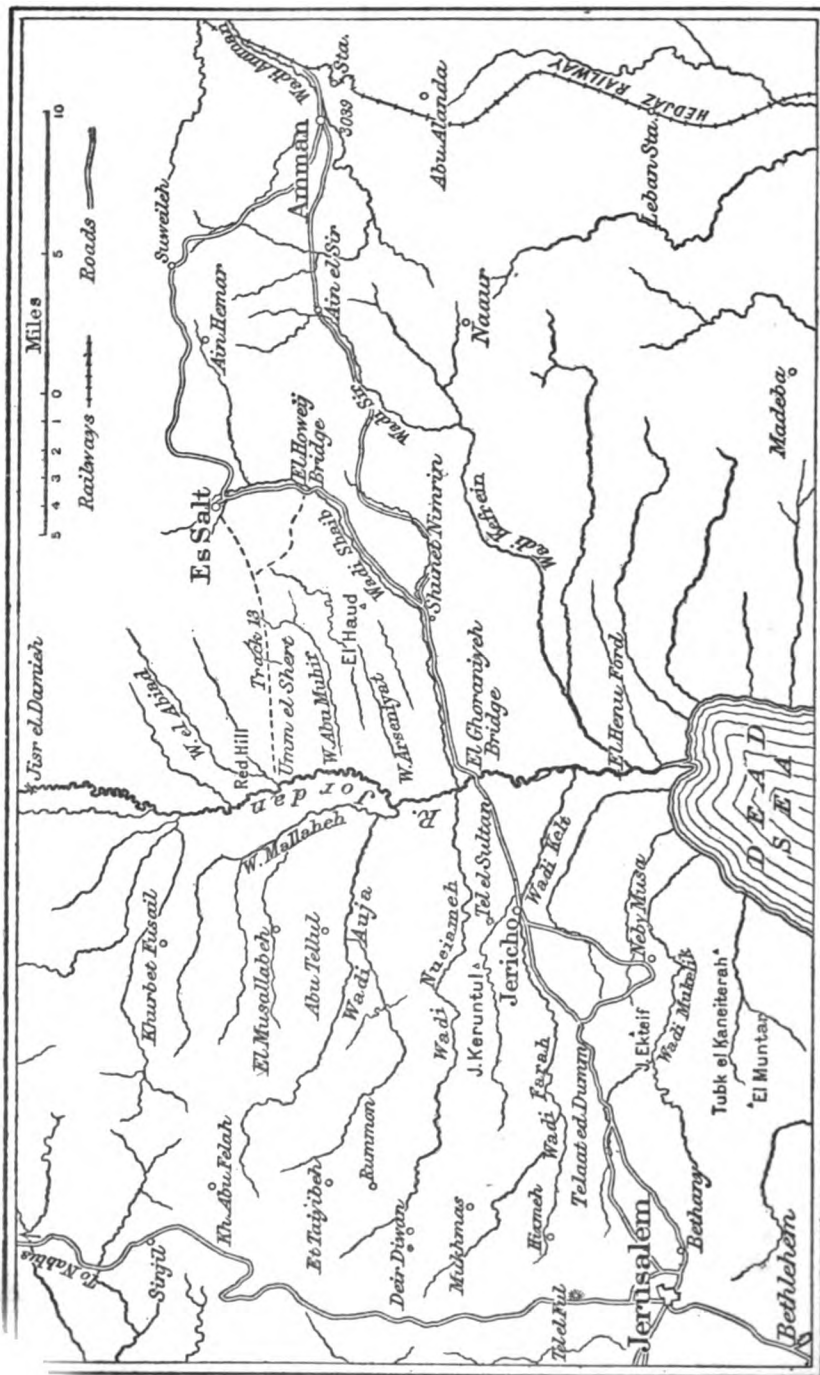
CHAPTER XIX

ACROSS THE JORDAN

THE events of 1918 now to be narrated need to be introduced with this general explanation : that Gen. Allenby contemplated at first a general attack in the late spring or early summer which would finish off the enemy ; that events in France in the spring of 1918 compelled him to give up many of his seasoned troops in favour of the Western Front and to accept in their stead Indian troops, some of them untrained ; that in consequence he had to postpone his main attack to the autumn, whilst those new troops were trained for their task. During the summer, however, he had to maintain his position of strategic threat against the enemy, and the basis of that was to keep in the enemy's mind the idea that the attack was to come by the Jordan Valley.

Some of the intensive training of early 1918 might have been criticised as useless at the time in view of the long period of almost stationary warfare in the summer. The very harsh trial to which troops were subjected through being kept in the pestilent Jordan Valley right through the hot weather might also have been criticised. But the long delay in the grand attack, with its consequent hardships, was not in any way due to any miscalculation of Gen. Allenby. He was the victim of circumstances in far-away France.

The position, then, at the beginning of 1918 (before the events in the spring on the French Front) was that Gen. Allenby considered it necessary to give his troops a short rest simply to reorganise his transport and supply services. He considered that a further advance was out of the question for a short time, though from London he was



Source: Geographical Sketches of the Jordan Valley

being urged to follow up the capture of Jerusalem by a great cavalry raid north. He wisely decided that before attempting this it was necessary to bring rail-head up to the existing line, and also to secure his right flank by driving the enemy across the Jordan near Jericho. The carrying of the crossings over the Jordan, as he pointed out, would give these advantages :

(a) The enemy would be prevented from raiding the tract of country to the west of the Dead Sea.

(b) Control of the Dead Sea would be obtained.

(c) A point of departure would be gained for operations eastwards, with a view to interrupting the enemy's line of communication to the Hedjaz, in conjunction with the Arab forces based on Akaba.

Gen. Allenby's first plan was to advance north along the coastal sector and east to the River Jordan simultaneously, but later he decided that an advance north would be hardly prudent for some time until his communications with the rear were greatly improved, and he decided to carry out the advance to the Jordan as a separate enterprise.

In this first operation across the Jordan the R.G.H. took no part, the cavalry work being entrusted to the Anzac Mounted Division. The 60th Division Infantry was holding the line east of Jerusalem. The plan was that the 60th Division should advance through the cliffs overlooking Jericho and that the Anzac Mounted Division should work on their right flank to come into the Jordan Valley near Neby Musa, thus cutting off the enemy's retreat from Jericho.

Extraordinary difficulties of ground were encountered by the mounted troops. They were compelled to move in single file over the roughest of tracks, which were exposed to heavy machine gun fire from enemy positions. In the final result the enemy was driven across the Jordan and our right flank was thus secured, but the full harvest hoped for was not achieved. After a pause in March a further advance was ordered, the troops encountering

again tremendous difficulties in the terrain. The infantry found it impossible for companies and platoons to move on a wide front. They struggled down slopes which were swept by machine gun and rifle fire, and along the bottoms of wadis raked by enfilade fire, and then faced ascents precipitously steep. The men had alternatively to hoist and pull each other up these slopes under fire, and finally to expel the enemy from the summits in hand-to-hand fighting.

By the middle of March the lower end of the Jordan Valley had been sufficiently cleared of the enemy to permit of operations against the Turkish line of communication to the Hedjaz in co-operation with the Arab forces under the Emir Feisal (now King of Irak), which were operating south-east of the Dead Sea.

During these operations the R.G.H. were resting and training in reserve, having as their chief trouble the weather. On January 1 the regiment marched from El Burj to Latron, where the bivouac area and the horse lines were found to be a sea of mud. On January 2 the march was continued to Yebna via Ramleh.

On January 3 a dismounted party of 85 O.R.'s, under Lieut. E. Gilholme, rode to Esdud to entrain for Belah, the horses returning the same day. The rest of the regiment on January 4 left Yebna. The marching out strength was 14 officers, 294 O.R.'s, 348 horses, 8 mules. Esdud was reached that day and Medjel the next day. On January 6 a bivouac north of Gaza was reached and on January 8 the rest camp north of the lagoon at Deir-el-Belah. Here on January 9 2nd Lieut. A. J. Page and a draft of 7 O.R.'s joined for duty from Tidworth and 32 O.R.'s returned for duty. On this day training was started in the Hotchkiss gun. On January 14, 24 further reinforcements arrived, and on January 17, 2nd Lieut. E. Fenn and 2nd Lieut. H. G. Southam reported for duty. On January 21 intensive training in musketry commenced, and the regiment was inspected on January 24 by the Corps Commander at the rifle range. On that

date Lieut. F. H. Bailey, of the Shropshire Yeomanry, reported for duty and was attached to the regiment.

The musketry training was favoured by fine weather from the 21st to the 24th inclusive. This musketry training was continuous. Each squadron was allotted $3\frac{1}{4}$ hours each day, and the markers were worked in three reliefs. Of the 399 men available for firing the course, 395 were able to complete or partly complete all practices. The results obtained were very satisfactory. Squadron averages were :

" B " Squadron average (including all men who fired)	109.09
" A "	107.58
" D "	105.46
H.Q.	97.09
Transport	48.45

Highest individual scores were :

" A " Squadron, Pte. Saunders, G.	..	..	142
" A " Squadron, Pte. Neale	..	..	137
" A " Squadron, Pte. Draper, E.	..	..	132
" B " Squadron, Corpl. Bee	..	..	140
" B " Squadron, Pte. Lewis, C. E.	..	..	139
" B " Squadron, Pte. Wearing, A.	..	..	139
" D " Squadron, Corpl. Foden	..	..	147
" D " Squadron, Corpl. Hambling, M. L.	..	..	147
" D " Squadron, Sergt. Catley	..	..	142
H.Q., Pte. Hill, C. E.	..	..	138
H.Q., Pte. Fordyce	..	..	136
H.Q., Pte. Luker, T.	..	..	131
Transport, Pte. Watkins, A.	..	..	128
Transport, Pte. Harper, J.	..	..	127
Transport, Lce.-Corpl. Williams, A. J.	..	..	122

The training covered also every other branch of work—riding, individual and troop training, Hotchkiss gun and signalling classes, instruction of junior officers, N.C.O. classes and care of kit, saddlery, arms, and equipment.

The strength of the regiment with unit in the field, on January 31 was 23 officers, 443 O.R.'s, 467 horses, 45

mules, and 15 donkeys, and the effective strength was 25 officers, 448 O.R.'s, 475 horses, 45 mules, and 17 donkeys. During February training work was continued. On February 1 Capt. E. P. Butler was attached to brigade headquarters as understudy to the Staff Captain and Lieut. P. H. Morgan took over the duties of Adjutant. Some leave to England and to Egypt was allowed during this time, and various officers were detailed for special courses.

Leave was also possible for the members of the Egyptian Labour Corps, and they showed great ingenuity in giving reasons why they should be allowed a holiday. One amusing example of "pidgin" English was this letter applying for leave: "Sir, my absence is impossible, some man has uprooted my wife, my God I am annoyed. Yours faithfully."

On February 14 regimental orders quoted from the *London Gazette* the promotion of Lieut. A. W. Strickland to be Captain, with precedence from March 10, 1917, and on February 19 regimental orders quoted the *London Gazette* that the following had been mentioned in Gen. Sir A. Murray's despatches: Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., Corpl. R. M. Bowl, Pte. I. F. James, Sig.-Sergt. C. E. Teague.

Notification was received on this date from brigade H.Q. that the Commander-in-Chief had awarded the Military Medal to: Lce.-Corpl. E. Turner and Pte. A. E. Eagles.

On February 22 the Brigade Troop Competition for the divisional sports resulted: Warwicks 82 per cent., Gloucesters 80 per cent., Worcesters 79 per cent.

For the week beginning February 25 training was advanced to provide for regimental drill, artillery barrage formation, cavalry acting dismounted, cavalry mounted in close and extended order, scheme against flagged enemy and machine guns, and night outposts.

The strength of the regiment, with unit in the field, on February 28 was 21 officers, 418 O.R.'s, 492 horses,

42 mules, and 15 donkeys, and the effective strength was 24 officers, 448 O.R.'s, 505 horses, 42 mules, and 17 donkeys.

During March the regiment remained at Deir-el-Belah, carrying on training work and salvage operations at Shaluf. On March 10 the divisional sports were held, and the regiment secured several prizes. On March 14 the division was inspected by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, who presented decorations. There were on this parade 17 officers, 273 O.R.'s of the R.G.H.

During the stay in rest camp the regiment organised a hunt, "The R.G.H. Hounds."

The "Hounds" consisted of one couple known as "Tripe" and "Onions." The former was a marvel for nose drive and tongue. He could own to a scent over the dry sand on the hottest of days, and was always keen. The only thing that caused him to tire was want of water, and when hunting arrangements had to be made for him to get a supply before returning to the kennels. "Onions" preferred the environs of the camp to fox chasing, and when the regiment moved forward he deserted and was no more heard of. Some day perhaps the gallant M.F.H. will write a history of "Tripe." There were some quaint incidents.

On February 9 the R.G.H. hounds met at "St. James' Park." Found a brace of jackals and ran one in a big circle until finally he swam the Wadi Ghuzze near Red House and was lost. Another was found and ran to Goz-el-Taïre, where the hunt changed on to a shepherd's dog and was whipped off.

On the 12th the hunt found at Review Hill and ran to Jemmi to ground. Found again near the cemetery and ran to In Seirat. Corpl. G. Castle had a nasty experience when digging for a "fox." Having got into the earth some considerable distance the sand roof fell in and buried him. Fortunately his companions were able to dig him out none the worse, and he was able to accompany the hunt that afternoon.

The following account was sent to the *Field* of a hunt that took place on February 24, when a cap was taken for the Hunt Servants' Benefit Society amounting to £40.

FOX HUNTING IN PALESTINE

Some months ago I noticed a very interesting account in the *Field* of hunting in Mesopotamia, and we, too, in Palestine are doing our best, when not employed hunting Johnny the Turk, to make Charlie the Pug cry "Capevi." There is more than one bobbery pack in existence, and the Cairo Lost Dogs' Home is one of the first places where any embryo Master goes to when on leave, and sometimes he is fortunate enough to be able to augment his pack with a really useful hound, for, dog though it may be, from the moment of purchase it is afterwards honoured with the name of hound. With the — Yeomanry Hounds fields rule large, generally somewhere about a hundred, increased by second horsemen and casual followers. Sport has been good, and more than one fox has paid the penalty. On a recent outing the fixture was the Red House, on the banks of the Wadi Ghuzze, a place well known to anyone who has taken part in the attacks on Gaza. Previous to a start being made a cap was taken in aid of the funds of the Hunt Servants' Benevolent Society. Proceedings then opened, hounds drawing a three-acre orange grove surrounding the house, generally a safe find for either fox or jackal, but to-day they were not at home, and the pack continued to draw several small copses close to the wadi bed with like result. Suddenly the field were awakened by the first whipper-in's shrill holloa; a jack had broken covert far ahead. A toot on the horn soon had hounds together, and over the wadi the field galloped. There was a scent, too, hounds throwing their tongues well as they gained the grass on the opposite bank, hard pressed by an eager field, only restrained by the field master's wonderful vocabulary. Hopes of a gallop over the cream of the country were, however, short lived, as the jack, realising that things looked a bit hot, and that St. James' Park covert—his first hope of refuge—was some distance off, adopted different tactics. Turning sharp right-handed, he made off for the wadi banks, hoping, no doubt, to find some friendly earth, and so allow him to spend his afternoon in peace. But he was wrong, for as he retraced his steps the pack caught their first view, and across the wadi he had to go, with hounds on the very best of terms. Fortunately the field were spared galloping over the 200 yds. or so of wet and holding sand, as with commendable foresight the engineers had erected a wooden bridge. 'Hunt

servants first ' was shouted, the ever-present field master incidentally getting a bit of his own back on one or two rather eager senior officers. Hounds were already across the wadi, and heading for that intricate and difficult piece of waste land which lies between the Gaza road and the sea. The going was heavy, but here again our friends the engineers came to the rescue, for a road—now disused—helped followers to keep the flying pack in view without unduly distressing the horses. But you cannot see all the fun from the road, so with a hope that they would fall the right side, if fall they had to, the task of negotiating the innumerable trenches leading towards Samson's Ridge was undertaken by many, and the gentleman whose profession at home used to be catching gentlemen's horses had the time of his life, for the sandbags on both paradors and parapets were rotten, and it took a goodish "lep" to get across.

At last came a check, and it was as well, too, for the field had got into a perfect maze of old wire entanglements. A few were fortunate enough to secure their second horses before a holloa for'ard from a corporal in charge of some natives dismantling enemy fortifications had the field going again, only to finally lose the jack on the outskirts of Gaza, after a really sporting hunt enjoyed by a field which included many of the hardest riders from the most famous packs at home.

ADAMHILL.

On March 7 the 22nd Brigade held a steeplechase meeting, when the Palestine Grand National was won by a Warwickshire Yeomanry squadron leader.

On March 23 2nd Lieut. E. H. Cook was attached to the Royal Flying Corps for prospective transfer. At the end of the month the regiment was preparing to march again into the line.

The strength of the regiment, with unit in the field, on March 31 was 22 officers, 431 O.R.'s, 477 horses, 42 mules, and 15 donkeys, and the effective strength was 24 officers, 444 O.R.'s, 481 horses, 42 mules, and 15 donkeys.

On April 1 the regiment moved to Gaza. The marching out strength was 21 officers, 403 O.R.'s, 465 horses, 32 mules, and 14 donkeys. One officer and 29 O.R.'s proceeded by train. On April 2 the regiment moved to Medjel, and on April 3 to Sukereir, and on April 4 to

Deiran, and on April 5 to Selmeh, where standing camp was pitched. Visits from hostile aircraft were frequent, but were driven off by our own Air Force.

While in this camp parties of the regiment were allowed to visit Jaffa, the most considerable town that had been encountered since leaving Egypt. (Gaza, when occupied by our troops, though it had been formerly the second town of Palestine, was merely a mass of ruins.) Jaffa was attractive alike for its historical associations, its surrounding Jewish colonies, and its opportunities for shopping.

Some opportunities came also for visits to Jerusalem, and the diary of an officer records :

A car took us out to the Mount of Olives, where we were shown round an extraordinary German chapel about the size of a large London church. Inside was a fresco of the German Kaiser and his wife, dressed like a sort of Apostle. There was a wonderful view of the Dead Sea 15 miles away.

We walked down the Mount of Olives, which is a terraced hill covered with stones and rocks, across the brook Kedron, which runs between it and the town, and up to the Garden of Gethsemane. If only the religious bodies who have taken possession of these spots would leave them alone ! But they build horrible new churches on the sites which take away all the feeling one would otherwise have. We then walked back up the hill towards the city walls, which are the most impressive things in the place.

We looked and stood on Golgotha, and then walked through the Holy City and saw the Mosque of Omar and the Dome of the Rock. Inside is a railed space, in the middle of which is the top of the rock—Mount Moriah—just the top of the mountain cleared off all rough, where the Holy of Holies was and the burnt sacrifices were offered. We walked a few yards outside to where the money-changers were driven out, which is more or less how one imagined it.

From there we went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and saw inside the tomb of our Lord and the stone where His body was laid to be anointed. There is much disagreement about the real spot. One outside the city walls, was a green mound like a skull, and quite what one would imagine.

As the Wailing Wall is the only part of Solomon's Temple left, and the Dome of the Rock and the Pool of Bethesda are really

the only genuine things in the place, they appealed to me more than anything else.

In some of the churches three different sects have their separate hours for worship, and sometimes there are three altars alongside of each other.

The next day we visited the five stations of the Cross and the arch where Christ was led out by Pilate to the people. We also saw the tombs of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Personally I cannot believe Calvary is where they say it is. It is so very unlikely that Christ should have been buried within 50 ft. of the Cross or that Joseph of Arimathea should have selected his tomb on a spot for public executions. We saw the Golden Gate through which our Lord rode in on the first Palm Sunday and the site of the Temple where Christ was found when lost by His parents, teaching the learned men.

Most of us, like that officer, on a first visit to Jerusalem have some feeling of disillusionment. The sacred traditions of the city have been so overgrown with superstitions and theatrical tricks and decorative tawdriness, and the varying sects of Christians have so little Christian love for one another. The Moslems, it has to be admitted for justice's sake, form the most dignified and reverent element in the city. Sympathy for the sorrows of the Jews—whose city this was for a few generations—is more than a little spoiled by the theatrical manifestation of that sorrow, as, for example, at the Wall of Wailing.

To get to the Wall of Wailing a complicated wriggle of the narrow alleys of Jerusalem has to be mastered, but the journey is rarely fruitless. Almost always there are wailers to be observed. The Wall of Wailing is a part of the wall of the old city of Jerusalem, beneath the site where once stood the Temple. Tradition says that this particular part of the present wall is the original wall which the Roman soldiers of Titus scaled, and that it was actually part of the sub-structure of the Temple itself. Here, therefore, the orthodox Jews betake themselves at intervals, men, women, and children, to mourn over the destruction of the Temple. Pious Jews abroad, who

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cannot hope to visit Jerusalem in person, send funds to the local Jews to go to the Wailing Wall and give vicarious expression to their grief. This money, known as "Halaka money," is one of the mainstays of the Jewish colony in Jerusalem. There are regular schools of wailers supported by it, and if sorrow at the Wall of Wailing expresses itself in tears these are collected and sold abroad as precious relics.

To visit the Wall of Wailing is to get a mixed impression of sympathy with the hereditary sorrow of a great race and of tedium with theatrical displays. Some of the wailers are clearly sincere—that old dame who kisses the wall, stone by stone, praying the while; that young zealot, a fury of longing in his attitude as he stretches his arms over the wall; that old man, a fierce sorrow shaking his shoulders with sobs as he burrows into a crevice of the wall, as though he would tear out of the stones some secret revelation. Others, however, are there for fashion's sake or for the pay they will draw. One cannot believe, for instance, in that smug youngster, his ritual kiss-curls just forming on his downy cheek, chanting from the Talmud, and chanting more loudly when he sees himself observed; nor in that wily old bird who, as he reads out his wails, coquettishly twists one of his kiss-curls around finger and thumb. But perhaps this comment is in a way unjust. Is it the case that at the ceremonies of our Christian churches all who attend are seriously devout?

The "new" Jews do not visit the Wall of Wailing. Some of the orthodox Jews resent the fact that they do not. To go down to the Wall of Wailing and there display publicly one's grief at the loss of the Temple is the one unmistakable sign of being orthodox and being brave in orthodoxy. Not to go is apt to give rise to the suspicion that a Jew is either not earnest in faith or is ashamed to show earnestness.

Bethlehem, though it has had inflicted upon it much from the vulgarity of man, seems yet to triumph over it

better than Jerusalem and to live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light.

Going south from Jerusalem the arid hills, hot and bare beneath the sun, all at once soften in their hearts when near Bethlehem. There have been on the road now and again little clumps of olive trees, keeping to a meek and shabby existence by their patient suffering of the cruelty of the upper and nether heat of the sun and the limestone. Now there show groves of a far more generous growth, and also orchard and other trees of our familiar English kind. The landscape loses its asperity and becomes almost verdant on the approach to the village where Christ was born.

Few of the sites of the holy places in Palestine are unquestionably authentic. According to that fine soldier, Gordon, the real Hill of Calvary was not that on which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre has been raised. The Well of the Woman of Samaria is almost singular in that it is certainly the well at which Christ tarried to talk in Divine charity. But it is not needful to be certain that the grottos beneath the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem are the sites of the actual birthplace and of the actual manger. Indeed, hearing of the vain and un-Christian strife as to what sect has the best right to replace a worn-out nail in the star which marks the supposed place of the Nativity, one dares the hope that these "actual sites" are not authentic, and that the Holy Family found their poor refuge in some spot which is not now decked out in panoply of purple and brass and darkened with the smoke of incense. But, without any doubt at all, Bethlehem was the village of the Nativity. Somewhere in this little village the World's Ransom came down to earth, and its gracious and tender atmosphere to-day seems to carry a memory of that supreme act of love.

There was surely always a foreshadowing of that atmosphere. Bethlehem was David's village, and with its well is linked one of the rare, tender gleams in the stormy history of the ancient Israelites:

And David longed, and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that is at the gate!

And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord.

And said, My God, forbid it me, that I should do this thing; shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it.

Bethlehem to-day is almost wholly an Arab village, and very largely a Christian Arab village. Many of the inhabitants are said to be descended from the Crusaders, but they describe themselves as Arabs. In appearance they resemble Western Europeans rather than Orientals. Some are curiously British in appearance. Bethlehem, of course, has many links with England, beginning with St. Helen (born at Colchester) and her son Constantine, to whom is attributed the building of the Church of the Nativity, which shares with Ravenna Church the fame of being the oldest of Christian temples. The inhabitants of Bethlehem hold themselves a little apart from the rest of the people of Palestine; not with such exclusiveness as the Samaritans of Nablus, but yet with a consciousness of some distinction in that they dwell on holy ground. They guard their village zealously from the intrusion of the unworthy.

At Selmeh intensive training was kept up, the purpose of it being to make all ranks familiar with what was already decided upon as the next development of the campaign—the breaking of a gap in the enemy line through which the cavalry would pour towards the enemy's rear.

On April 11 Capt. W. Sebag-Montefiore, M.C., of the 5th Lancers, joined the regiment, and Capt. R. E. Vine, of the 12th Lancers, was also attached. On this day in carrying out a brigade scheme shrapnel helmets were worn for the first time by all ranks. Training was continued at Selmeh until April 20, when a move was made to Richon, the great Jewish vine-growing settlement.

A notable event was the farewell parade in honour of the Worcestershire Yeomanry on April 18. They left the 5th Mounted Brigade to join the 20th Corps in the Jordan Valley as corps cavalry. This marked the end of the old 1st South Midland Mounted Brigade, which before the war had consisted of the R.G.H., the Warwick and Worcester Yeomanry, the Warwick R.H.A., and the 1st South Midland Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance. After Gallipoli this had become the 5th Mounted Brigade.

It was already known that reorganisation was pending and it was reported that the 5th Mounted Brigade would consist in the near future of the R.G.H. and two Indian cavalry regiments, but before that was effected the regiment was to have a taste of campaigning across the Jordan.

Naturally the regiment did not get at this time full information regarding the grave crisis in regard to the fortunes of war on the Western Front, but there was some inkling of what had happened. In the spring of 1918 Germany for the first time could concentrate practically her whole strength on the Western Front, as she had no longer to meet the Russian armies. By February, 1918, it had been apparent to the British High Command in France that a great attack designed to push the British army towards the coast and to give to the Germans command of the Channel ports was contemplated. It is said that General Hindenburg had promised the German army that by April 1 it would be in Paris. The enemy came very close to success. At one time preparations were actually made for the withdrawal of the British forces south of the Somme and for the destruction of Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne so as to deny their use to the enemy.

The repercussion of these events in France affected the Palestine forces of Gen. Allenby seriously. He was called upon during April and May to sacrifice many of his veteran troops to reinforce the French front and to

fill their places with Indian troops. Two complete infantry divisions (the 52nd and 74th Divisions) and 25 battalions of infantry from other divisions left the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. The 60th London Division gave up 9 battalions, the 10th Irish Division and the 53rd Welsh Division were also levied upon, and the 54th East Anglian Division was the only one left composed exclusively of white troops. Further, yeomanry regiments were taken to form machine gun corps for France.

In place of the two divisions sent away Gen. Allenby was given the 3rd Lahore and the 7th Meerut Divisions from Mesopotamia. (Each of these divisions had three regular battalions of British soldiers and nine battalions of Indian infantry.) To fill the vacancies caused by taking British battalions from other divisions Gen. Allenby received second-line Indian infantry who were only partially trained. When the alterations were complete as regards infantry, Gen. Allenby had 34 battalions of British infantry, 49 battalions of Indian infantry, and two battalions of the British West India regiment. In his mounted troops the effect of the changes was not so serious, for the yeomanry regiments who were taken away were replaced by fully-trained regular Indian cavalry, who proved worthy comrades in arms. After the reorganisation the Desert Mounted Corps was to consist of :

Anzac Division.—1st A.L.H. Brigade, 2nd A.L.H. Brigade, N.Z.M.R. Brigade ; no change.

Australian Division.—3rd A.L.H. Brigade, 4th A.L.H. Brigade, 5th Mounted Brigade—afterwards 13th Cavalry Brigade (to consist of the R.G.H. and two Indian Cavalry regiments, 9th and 18th Bengal Lancers).

4th Cavalry Division.—10th Cavalry Brigade, 11th Cavalry Brigade, 12th Cavalry Brigade, each consisting of one yeomanry regiment and two Indian cavalry regiments.

5th Cavalry Division.—14th Cavalry Brigade, 15th Cavalry Brigade, the former consisting of a yeomanry

regiment and two Indian cavalry regiments, and the last-named brigade of three Imperial Service Indian cavalry regiments.

On April 23 Major L. Avery, R.A.M.C., joined the regiment as Medical Officer in place of Capt. C. M. Forster, who left the regiment to join the Umballa Field Ambulance.

On April 24 the regiment was ordered to move to Latron, which is the southern entrance to the passes through the Judæan Hills. The next day the regiment moved through the mountains to Enab, and on the night of the 26th moved by night to Telaat-ed-Dumm, passing on their way through the precincts of Jerusalem, and the next day moved on to the Jordan Valley by the old Roman road and camped on the west bank of the Jordan about three miles north of Jericho. That march across the Judæan Mountains to the Jordan will remain long in the memory of the regiment. Every step was on ground made familiar by Holy Scripture—past Jerusalem, the Hill of Calvary, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane; along the road down from Jerusalem to Jericho through wild defiles, by which the Hebrews had come to the Promised Land and which had been traversed by so many ancient armies; past the legendary tomb of Moses and the stone *khan*, which is identified—more or less veraciously—as the Inn of the Good Samaritan; then plunging down the old Roman road into the valley of the Dead Sea. Though it was yet early in the year this valley already gave hint of the furnace heat which makes it one of the most desolate spots on earth.

An officer's impression of this march :

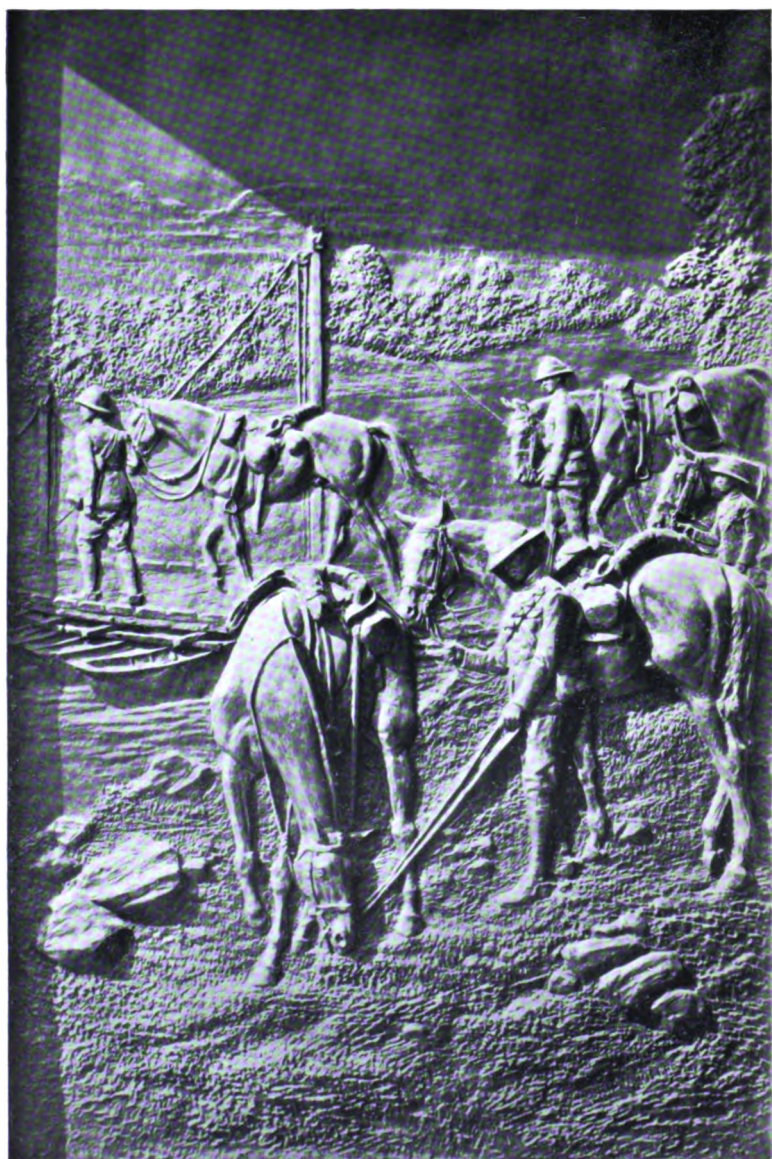
Friday, 26.—We leave Enab at 7 p.m. and trek 21 miles through Jerusalem by moonlight, which was very impressive, and we halted at midnight two miles beyond Bethany in the country known in the Bible as the Wilderness, where we off-saddled and had tea. We arrived at Telaat-ed-Dumm at 3 a.m., April 26, very tired and dirty. This place is half way between

Jerusalem and Jericho, and there is plenty of water, otherwise there is nothing to say about it. The country is a veritable wilderness ; not a tree, not a crop, not a blade of grass, not an animal except scorpions, snakes, vultures, and hawks (the latter most consistent camp followers now). Forty days and 40 nights here would indeed be a penitence !

Up north you can see a prominent hill overlooking Jericho called Keruntel, or the Hill of Temptation, where the devil tempted our Lord. Below it in the face of the rock is an Anchorite monastery, where wicked monks are sent as a punishment for their sins. Running near Telaat-ed-Dumm is the Wadi Kelt, with a good running stream in it, and also a few convents or monasteries, some built into the most precipitous rocks and apparently impossible of approach. One can also see the old Roman aqueducts, beautifully built and still used to carry water down the hills to Jericho. Telaat-ed-Dumm appeared to us to be a most beastly place, nothing but dust and stones, but we little knew how delightful a spot it was compared to the valley below.

April 27.—We moved at 2 p.m. to the Jordan Valley. We went down the old road, which was very rocky, rough, and precipitous, while the wheeled transport went by the new road, recently made by the Turks, very much longer but with good gradients. This road passes by Neby Musa (" the Tomb of Moses "), where he is supposed by the Moslems to have been buried, but as, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, he died in the Moabite hills east of Jordan, it seems to me doubtful. There is an annual Moslem pilgrimage there from Jerusalem, and it happened to be taking place that day. About 1,000 pilgrims went to worship for three or four days.

The modern Jericho is on a flat, with a long avenue of poplars running north-west, and many gardens of apricots, bananas, grapes, oranges, and tomatoes. It has two hotels, a convent, a mosque, and the rest are filthy Bedouin hovels. The inhabitants are filthy, but the Bedouins are finely built, dark, swarthy, good-looking. We turned north and went up the valley till we came to our camping ground, which was nothing but rocks. We had no idea what the position of affairs was, where our outpost line was, or where the Turks were, but I thought it unnecessary that just as we arrived in our camping area five shells should burst all round us. It looked as if we were going to be in an uncomfortable spot, but on examination the shell cases proved to be British ones, so the matter was duly reported, and the apologies of the battery, who were carrying out some experiments, were duly received.



R.G.H. CROSSING THE JORDAN

The position in regard to the Jordan operations up to the middle of March has been already described. The British force had then cleared the Jordan Valley sufficiently to enable operations to be carried out for the help of the King of Hedjaz. Gen. Allenby's plan thereafter was to make a bold raid on the enemy's railway line of communication with the Hedjaz, and the progress of this plan up to April 30 must be recorded. The Sherif Feisal (now King Feisal of Irak) was operating against the town of Maan with an Arab force, and if we could cut the Turkish line of railway to the Hedjaz it would materially assist this attack. The immediate effect of such a raid would be to compel the enemy to withdraw his force, which had recently occupied Tafle. It might also force him to call on the Turkish troops at Maan for aid, thus weakening the garrison there, and helping the Arabs to attack. Amman was the most vulnerable point on the Hedjaz railway. The Arabs had often destroyed by raids portions of the railway line farther south, but had only succeeded in interrupting the traffic for a few days at a time. At Amman, however, the line ran over a viaduct and through a tunnel. If these two works could be thoroughly destroyed the interruption of communications might be sufficient to compel the retirement of all the enemy forces in the Maan area.

The Turks had provided for the protection of Amman as many troops as they could spare. The town itself, which lay immediately to the west of, and covering, the tunnel and viaduct, had been garrisoned and prepared for defence. An advanced defensive position had been established astride the Jericho—Es Salt road, extending from El Haud to Shunet Nimrin, and a third position was in course of preparation on the east bank of the Jordan, opposite El Ghoraniyeh.

Amman is the principal Circassian centre in Syria and lies some 30 miles east-north-east of the north end of the Dead Sea. From the Jordan at El Ghoraniyeh, 1,200 ft. below the level of the sea, to Nasur, 16 miles

farther east, at the edge of the plateau on which Amman lies, the ground rises 4,300 ft. Nearly the whole of this rise occurs in the last 10 miles. The intervening country is a maze of rocky hills, intersected by deep ravines and traversed only by a few narrow footpaths.

The first attempt on Amman was made on the night of March 21-22, and the troops detailed for it were the 60th London Division, the Anzac Mounted Division, and the Imperial Camel Brigade. The 60th Division was to advance to Es Salt and hold that town whilst the mounted troops moved directly on to Amman and destroyed the railway. When this was accomplished all the troops were to withdraw to the bridge-heads at the Jordan.

Heavy rain hampered the operations considerably, and the delay thus caused enabled the enemy to bring up reinforcements to meet our troops after they had crossed the Jordan and had penetrated as far as Es Salt. Amman was found to be covered by strong enemy reinforcements, and our forces withdrew to the west side of the Jordan after effecting some minor demolitions.

By the evening of April 2 our whole force had recrossed the Jordan with the exception of troops left to hold the bridge-head on the east bank. The raid had not succeeded in doing any permanent damage to the Hedjaz railway but had helped the Sherif Feisal in his attack.

Gen. Allenby decided to take the next favourable opportunity to cross the Jordan again, and this time to occupy Es Salt until the Arab forces, under Sherif Feisal, could advance to that point. The operation was planned for the middle of May, but was put forward a fortnight on the representations of a deputation from the Beni Sakhr tribe, who said that they would co-operate with an advance if it took place before May 4 but not afterwards. It was to take part in this attack that the R.G.H. had marched to the Jordan.

April 29, 1918, is a date which the regiment will always keep in memory—the day they crossed the Jordan. It is said that in one of the little country post offices at this

time a postmistress, who was a keen student of the Bible but not of modern geography, refused letters addressed to soldiers at Jerusalem and Jericho on the ground that they were "only in the Bible" and no such places really existed now. The story is "not gospel," for the British soldier with an Expeditionary Force does not have his letters addressed to any centre where his camp may happen to be, but it illustrates the appreciation that there was at the time of the almost legendary character of the campaign in which we were engaged in Palestine.

The regiment crossed the river by the Ghoraniyeh Bridge, then turned north to the Wadi Abu Muhir and then rested until dawn. The regimental strength in crossing was 22 officers, 375 O.R.'s, 421 riders, 39 pack animals, and 13 donkeys. The officers of the squadrons were :

"A" Squadron.—Capt. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave, M.C., Capt. R. E. Vines, Lieut. E. T. Cripps, Lieut. G. V. Hawtrey, and Lieut. R. H. Wilson, M.C.

"B" Squadron.—Capt. F. A. Mitchell, M.C., Capt. E. P. Butler, Capt. Lord Apsley, M.C., Lieut. E. G. Townsend, Lieut. F. H. Bailey, and 2nd Lieut. W. J. Pretty.

"D" Squadron.—Lieuts. E. Gilholme, F. J. Turner, and T. H. Inglis, 2nd Lieuts. H. V. Moon and A. C. Cornwall.

Headquarters.—Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., Capt. A. H. S. Howard, M.C., Major L. Avery (R.A.M.C.), Lieut. P. H. Morgan, 2nd Lieuts. L. J. Page and G. E. Hookham.

CHAPTER XX

A SHORT VISIT TO ES SALT

THE enemy's position on the occasion of our second raid on Es Salt ran north and south, astride the Jericho—Amman road, just west of Shunet Nimrin, his left resting on the gorge of the Wadi Kefrein and his right across the Wadi Arseniyat track to El Haud. Both flanks were protected by detachments of cavalry. From Shunet Nimrin two roads led back to Amman—a metalled road through Es Salt and a more direct track through El Sir. The former was the only one available for wheeled traffic, but the latter had been greatly improved by the Turks since our first raid into Es Salt.

The plan was for the infantry to attack from the west, with the New Zealand Mounted Brigade on their right flank, while the remainder of the cavalry, moving along the east bank of the Jordan as far as Umm-el-Shert and Jisr-el-Damieh, turned up the hills along the tracks from those two places, and captured Es Salt, thus cutting the road to Amman. The Beni Sakhr Arabs undertook to hold the Ain-el-Sir track. With their two lines of reinforcement and retreat thus closed there appeared to be a good prospect of destroying the enemy forces at Shunet Nimrin.

In order to prevent the enemy from transferring troops from the east to the west bank of the Jordan at Jisr-el-Damieh (as he had done during the previous raid), one brigade of cavalry, the 4th A.L.H., was directed to seize the Turkish bridge at that place if possible. If, however, it proved too strong to be taken, the brigade was to take up a position covering the track to Es Salt, and endeavour to prevent the enemy crossing the river.

From the R.G.H. the regimental transport, less the water cart and one limbered waggon, was detached and reported for duty to Headquarters, Jericho. One troop of "B" Squadron was attached as escort to the Brigade Camel Transport and another troop of "B" Squadron to the Brigade Camel Ammunition Column as escort. The remainder of the regiment, as part of the 5th Mounted Brigade, was to follow the Umm-el-Shert track towards Es Salt. It was marked on the maps as "Track 13," a number which was variously interpreted as a good omen or a bad omen by those who had any superstitions in regard to numbers.

Early in the day the Sherwoods and the Worcestershire Yeomanry, who were the leading troops of the brigade, came into action with a small body of the enemy, and while the R.G.H. was advancing in support Sergt. A. F. Roberts of "A" Squadron was killed and one trooper wounded. Pushing along the rough mountain track the force gained the plateau above the Jordan Valley, and encountered here exceptionally difficult mountainous country. In many places the men had to dismount and lead their horses in single file up the roughest of bridle paths with precipitous banks. In some places the men could not even lead their horses, and had to hold on to the tails of the animals, which pulled them up. The camels, with the carriers for the evacuation of the wounded, could not face the ascent and were sent back.

On the plateau the brigade halted for an hour, and when the march was resumed two squadrons ("A" and "B") of the R.G.H. took the advance guard and "D" Squadron the rear guard. The enemy were encountered some miles south of Es Salt in the late afternoon. "A" and "B" Squadrons R.G.H. dismounted for action. The G.O.C. came forward and made a personal reconnaissance of the position, and decided that it would be wisest to bivouac for the night and make an attack on Es Salt at dawn the next morning. The brigade accordingly bivouacked on the position, the R.G.H. supplying one composite post,

50 strong, on a high hill to the south-east, under Captain A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave. Three other outposts of nine men each were also supplied by the regiment. The night passed quietly, the enemy making no attack.

Meanwhile the 60th Division, whose rôle was to attack the enemy's position at Shunet Nimrin, had captured the advance works of that position, but were unable to make further progress in face of the stubborn resistance offered by the enemy. The 3rd A.L.H. Brigade, which had been favoured by a much better track, had reached to their side of Es Salt late in the afternoon, and were held up for a time by some enemy works covering the town on the north-west. These works were, however, stormed, and the 8th Regiment, which had been held in reserve, galloped into the town, and by 7 o'clock in the evening had taken some 300 prisoners, a large number of machine guns, and all the papers and documents of the 4th Turkish Army Headquarters. One squadron of the 8th Regiment pursued the enemy some distance down the Amman road.

Early in the morning of May 1 the 5th Mounted Brigade and the 2nd and 1st A.L.H. Brigades pushed into Es Salt.

Down in the valley things were not progressing well. The 4th A.L.H. Brigade, which had the rôle of preventing the Turk from bringing up troops to threaten our rear, found itself in serious difficulties. The enemy had crossed the river during the night by a pontoon bridge, and at about 7.30 in the morning a strong Turkish force advanced on the 4th A.L.H. Brigade from the broken ground east of the River Jordan. Simultaneously another Turkish force deployed from the river valley and attacked the right flank of the brigade. The force was outnumbered by about five to one and was gradually forced back eastward against the hills. They made a heroic resistance, and a battery of the H.A.C. particularly distinguished itself, but they could not hold back the enemy.

At the close of May 1 the position was that we were in

possession of Es Salt, but the enemy had cut in on our rear, and, forcing back the 4th A.L.H. Brigade, had occupied all our lines of supply or retreat except the precipitous goat track (No. 13) by which the R.G.H. had advanced. If the Shunet Nimrin position could be carried by the 60th Division without further delay the situation could be cleared up ; otherwise it was extremely critical. Arrangements were made for a combined attack on the Shunet Nimrin position on May 2, the 60th Division to attack from the west and the mounted troops at Es Salt from the north-east.

The R.G.H. was ordered to picket the Es Salt—Nimrin road as far as the bridge at El Howeij. The road proved to be a good metal one in a fair state of repair. There was an abundant water supply from fresh water springs running down the sides of the wadis. "D" Squadron acted as advance guard. Contact was made with the enemy about half a mile north of El Howeij bridge, and "D" Squadron took up a defensive position on the hills commanding the road and overlooking a stone barricade which the enemy had erected across the road. At 9 o'clock the enemy commenced shelling this position. "A" and "B" Squadrons took up positions a little in the rear, picketing the road. At 9.30 a.m. the G.O.C. visited "D" Squadron's position and decided it was to stand fast. "D" Squadron was under some shell fire, and one N.C.O. and three O.R.'s were wounded. At dusk the regiment withdrew a little and bivouacked for the night alongside the road about one mile south of Es Salt, the Worcester Yeomanry and the Sherwood Rangers supplying the outpost line.

Early on May 2 "D" Squadron moved out to take up its position of the day before and found it occupied by the Turks. At 9.30 orders were received that the G.O.C. intended to attack the bridge at El Howeij to try to open up the road. The regiment was dismounted, and "A" and "B" Squadrons went to the support of "D" Squadron, which had now advanced practically

to the same position as that held the previous day. The Worcestershire Yeomanry and the Sherwood Rangers advanced on our left, but their progress was very slow owing to the precipitous ground, and they came under very heavy artillery and rifle fire and eventually were held up. Towards the evening the G.O.C. decided that any further attack on the position was impossible and the brigade was withdrawn to the previous night's bivouac. "D" Squadron R.G.H., supported by two troops of "B" Squadron, remained in the advanced position, and "A" Squadron occupied an outpost position west of the bivouac site.

An officer's narrative of these days :

At 2 a.m. on Tuesday, April 30, we arrived at our position of concentration. Here our water came up and we filled our water bottles for the last time. I tried to get off to sleep but it was too cold, and just as I was going off the 60th Division began their attack, which seemed quite close and appeared to progress very well, judging by the sound. At 4 a.m., the 4th and 3rd Brigades having preceded us, we moved off to advance up Track No. 13. We met with some opposition from snipers and machine guns from the Turkish right flank, and a good many bullets were flying about on the flat, and poor Sergt. Roberts was hit (for the fourth time) and killed. The Turks were on hills that were impossible to climb up, and we were just going to make a dismounted attack when it was decided to give them a miss and go up the track—a very wise move. The Worcesters led, and in single file we led our horses and started up.

Our column was nearly four miles long and the day was beginning to get hot. I have never had such a climb before, and hope I never shall again. All hills had to be picketed and it was a very slow job. There was no fighting but stray shots coming from all directions. We passed one well and a few of us had time for a drink, but as it was necessary to push on to Es Salt (the ancient Ramoth Gilead) we could not stop. One hostile machine gun which gave us a lot of trouble was eventually put out of action.

Finally we moved up a deep ravine to within a couple of miles of Es Salt, where our advance guard came in touch with the enemy and were heavily fired on. The order to dismount for action was promptly given, but as there was only room for two horses at a time it was no easy job to get the men up and they were all very exhausted. They had a long climb on to a high

hill, and it took a very long while to reconnoitre the place and see what was really going on. After about an hour troops were seen to our left front, and a patrol was sent out, which found them to be the 9th Light Horse (part of the 3rd Brigade), who had arrived by another route on our left. It was getting dark, and the Brigadier decided to bivouac for the night and make a dismounted attack on Es Salt the next morning. We moved up the valley to a large field of green barley and lucerne, which seemed a favourable place to picket the horses, as it would not be necessary to feed them. There was a very high hill in front and on this we put outposts, which our regiment found. It was not till 10 p.m. that we got our protection troops out.

Meanwhile the Turkish troops had been so engaged watching us that they allowed the 3rd Brigade (and, I believe, part of the 1st) to come round farther north and capture Es Salt, with 400 prisoners. This, of course, we did not know of till next day. Meanwhile orders were issued for the Worcesters and Sherwoods to attack dismounted at dawn while we saddled up ready to ride on as soon as possible.

May 1.—We found that Es Salt had been taken, so our regiment was sent on through Es Salt to seize El Howeij Bridge. We had a very steep ride down into the town and then through it. There was a beautiful stream of water, where we were able to water our horses and fill our water bottles. Everything in the town was pandemonium; Australians all over the place, here and there a dead Turk, a few captured machine guns, and one courtyard full of prisoners. We took possession of the place, set up a governor, took over the hospital and the post office, which we turned into Divisional Signal Office. Meanwhile the regiment, headed by "D" Squadron under Lieut. Gilholme, proceeded swiftly but carefully down the main Es Salt—Jericho road. This is a good road with a rushing stream by its side. It is deep down in a ravine, with here and there terraced gardens leading up to the heights above. Every now and then there is a narrow space on one side of the road where troops could move off the road. There is plenty of grass, but the road is mostly too rocky for the horses to climb up.

After going about four miles "D" Squadron was held up by rifle and machine gun fire about a mile north of El Howeij Bridge, so took up an outpost position astride the road. As stated before, the road is a defile, and the high mountains on either side were held by the enemy machine guns, which were impossible to reach. There was no means of attack except down the road, which of course was blocked at the bridge and covered all the way by machine guns. It appeared to be the obvious thing to

block the road and wait for the infantry to drive the Turks on to us. Meanwhile the 2nd Brigade went along the main road to Amman as far as Hemar while the 3rd Brigade occupied Es Salt and made out a defence scheme from the northwards. Presently the Brigadier and C.O. go forward for a personal reconnaissance. The line was settled; "D" Squadron to hold it, Worcesters and Sherwoods to picket the hills on each flank, and the brigade to get in touch with division and explain the position.

The divisional order was to attack. They seemed to attach the greatest importance to Howeij Bridge. But it was quite impossible to go on. Our pickets on the hills were surrounded by local Arabs, all armed with modern rifles, who will not disclose on which side they are going to fight. Though they probably prefer us they want to know which side is going to win! "D" Squadron remain all day in observation, all the time under heavy and accurate shell fire from a 4.5 gun and from a few machine guns. They got four casualties—two killed and two died of wounds. The latter were sent back to Es Salt in a German ambulance which was captured there.

At 12.45 we get orders to attack, which are afterwards countermanded. Meanwhile the 60th Division do not progress at all. The 2nd Brigade report all clear at Ain Hemar, and instead of being left there to hold the road they are brought back to help us attack El Howeij Bridge the next day.

Our communications are very bad and it takes very long to get any messages to divisional H.Q. Finally it is settled to go back three miles to bivouac, hold the pass there in a very much stronger position, and attack dismounted next morning. I go back to arrange a camp, which is difficult owing to cramped positions. Worcesters and Sherwoods do night out-posts. "D" Squadron came in the dark about 8 p.m. They are ordered to move out again to the same spot at 4 a.m. next morning. They apparently did very well and were complimented by the General. We have a fair night's rest, but only have one more day's food and no more for the horses. However, the latter will do well on grass, and there is plenty of water.

Thursday, May 2.—Reveill  4.30 a.m. "D" Squadron go out to same position, which is found to be held by Turks, who are, however, driven out. We got definite orders to attack dismounted. Worcesters and Sherwoods are to the left of the road, 2nd Brigade in reserve, and these attack through us. First and 3rd Brigades are to co-operate, but we don't know where they are. The question is, Have we enough ammunition to last more than two days? (Not unless we can get more!) So far we still have our communications along the tracks where wounded and

prisoners are being evacuated—a very difficult job. At 8 a.m. we move down the road. We have only our iron rations to eat now. The climbing up and down the ravine to reach necessary positions of deployment is a tremendous task, and as a result when the men do arrive they are so dead-beat they cannot go on. The attack starts very slowly, and both Worcesters, Sherwoods, and ourselves suffer casualties from shell fire. Meanwhile an attack by Turkish reinforcements develops from the Amman road and the 2nd Brigade are sent back there to fend it off. The attack is mostly by Circassian Horse, and, though not severe, it is accompanied by a good deal of shell fire which, coming from a fresh direction, necessitates a certain amount of readjustment of the position of our led horses. The result is that our dismounted attack is stopped, and towards evening the Worcesters and Sherwoods return, absolutely beat to the world—so much so that they have to go and rest and we are left to hold the line, with "D" Squadron still doing the front line, and they must carry on till morning and perhaps the next day. At night we hold the advanced position, and make a line across the road and put a detached post there under Sergt. Bromhead. We had a fairly comfortable night and ate some beef which we commandeered from local Bedouins. We were, however, out of biscuits and bread.

Turning now to the development of the general position. On May 2 the attack by the 60th Division on Shunet Nimrin did not prosper, in spite of determined efforts. The help which it had been intended to give the infantry by an attack from the north-east by the mounted troops could not be developed properly because of the necessity of holding back the Turkish counter-attack from Amman. Further, the promised attack by the Beni Sakhr tribe had not materialised. The position was thus extremely anxious, with our force greatly outnumbered and almost entirely surrounded by the enemy.

On May 3 the R.G.H. was still in the same position. At three o'clock in the morning of that day a troop of enemy cavalry patrolling the road north from the bridge were allowed to come within 100 yards of the barricade across the road which was held by Sergt. J. H. Bromhead and 8 O.R.'s with one Hotchkiss gun. Fifty rounds were fired into the enemy troop before they could get back to

cover, and heavy casualties were undoubtedly inflicted. Later in the day Sergt. R. Insoll, of "D" Squadron, with 10 O.R.'s and one Hotchkiss gun, was engaged in another gallant little action. The troop was holding an observation post overlooking the bridge and was heavily attacked by a batch of about 30 enemy infantry at close range, who were attempting to work round their left rear. Sergt. Insoll handled his troop with great courage and skill, inflicting severe casualties on the enemy and withdrawing to the support of the squadron with but one casualty.

At noon "D" Squadron was relieved in the line by "A" Squadron and "B" Squadron (the latter less two troops). The men of "D" Squadron withdrew in small parties. They had received three casualties during the day. A motor ambulance which we had captured from the enemy on the occupation of Es Salt proved useful in the evacuation of the wounded, who had to be brought back $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the dressing-station. During the afternoon enemy aircraft attacked the led horses, causing two casualties in "D" Squadron. At 7 o'clock in the evening orders were received that the brigade should withdraw. Capt. E. P. Butler with 20 O.R.'s formed the rearguard, and with the R.G.H. leading, the brigade moved along a new track towards Track 13, which had been reconnoitred by Capt. R. E. Vines. Shortly after midnight they arrived at a high point overlooking Track 13, which they had followed in their advance on Es Salt.

The brigade bivouacked until dawn and then took up positions to cover the retirement of the 1st A.L.H. Brigade along this track. The 1st A.L.H. then took up the rearguard duty, and the 5th Brigade retired through their ranks to a position lower down the path. The enemy pressed hard on the heels of our retirement. They were in great strength on the ridges directly in the rear and kept up a heavy rifle and machine gun fire. Attacks were also made by enemy aircraft with bombs and

machine guns. A camel machine gun was brought into position by them, but did not get effective range on the R.G.H. Its only casualty during the retirement was Sergt. A. Handy, wounded. The regiment returned via the Ghoraniyeh Bridge to its old bivouac on the west bank of the Jordan. The camel escort troop, under Lieut. E. G. Townsend, there rejoined the regiment.

The officer whose diary has been quoted before in this chapter writes of May 3 and 4 :

The attack continues. We are told fresh troops are coming up, but who they are we don't know. Capt. Vines discovers a track out from the road towards Track 13 which may be useful to let us out. I rode up to regimental headquarters to have a look round. Horses are doing well but have had their saddles on a very long time, especially the squadrons in front. Towards evening a donkey convoy arrives with ammunition. "D" Squadron at last is relieved by "B" and they come back. I put them alongside the river, and they all undress and have a good wash and rest. They are bombed, and two get badly wounded, including F. E. Garrett, who had done some very good work as a stretcher-bearer.

Meanwhile the situation gets more and more critical. We settle down for the night, off-saddle, and cook our dinner of mutton and cabbages, but just before we start to eat the Brigadier comes by and says "Move in half an hour. We are returning back by the track discovered by Capt. Vines at 2 o'clock a.m." All is hurry and bustle. Every man is told to eat a good dinner and leave his fire burning. At 2.30 we move down the road and meet "A" and "B" Squadrons at a pre-arranged spot. We are followed by the whole brigade. The line is nearly five miles long. The track is quite a good one, but we have to lead our horses a good way and go very slowly in order not to get out of touch. Eventually, after four hours, we arrive at a spot overlooking Track 13. We had to wait till dawn as it was impossible to proceed further in the dark, and at this spot the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Brigades had to pass.

Saturday, May 4.—At 4 a.m. we start. I am sent on with pack horses and the mountain battery and ambulance. The track in many places was worse than going downstairs, and how men managed riding one horse and leading another I don't know. The horses had, however, become like cats. Occasionally portions

of the track were under artillery fire from the Turks, who had quickly moved up their light guns. I had one man hit and one white pony killed. Eventually we reached the Jordan Valley, where shelling and bombing increased considerably, but, not being tied to one track, I scattered all the force and proceeded to Ghoraniyeh Bridge, where the regiment assembled, and we eventually arrived in camp at 12 o'clock, after a 36-mile trek, very exhausted. Our casualties were six killed, two died of wounds, and eight wounded. Meanwhile, down in the valley there had been great anxiety and everyone was very anxious about our safety. The 4th Brigade had been driven back with heavy losses. The 60th Brigade had suffered badly, but we had got well over 1,000 prisoners, all of whom were brought in.

One fine transport feat on the night of May 1-2 marked this operation. Ammunition and food for our troops were almost exhausted and fresh supplies had to be sent to Es Salt before morning. No vehicles could get up the Umm-el-Shert track, and camels were equally out of the question, but each of the cavalry regiments had at this time a few donkeys, which were used by cooks and batmen, who did not usually accompany their units into action. About 200 of these were collected at Ghoraniyeh in the evening, loaded with ammunition and stores, and sent off in charge of a subaltern of the gunners. Marching all night, they succeeded in reaching Es Salt, which was then being hotly attacked by the enemy, on the morning of the 2nd, delivered their sorely-needed ammunition, and returned safely to Ghoraniyeh. The distance covered on the double journey was 40 miles, over an appalling country, and with the prospect of stumbling into the enemy at any moment. The men of the convoy had had no sleep for the two previous nights, and, being cavalymen, were unaccustomed to marching. To have carried out the task under such difficulties was a great feat.

So far as its main purpose was concerned this attack across the Jordan may be described as a failure, but it had inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, and it had fulfilled its subsidiary purpose of persuading him that the

real objective of our High Command was an attack on Amman. Further, it had given glorious proof of the hardihood and skill of our troops under circumstances of the greatest difficulty. The force with which we had pushed into the enemy country would probably have achieved a full success if the Arab auxiliaries had fulfilled their pledges, but owing to their failure it found itself surrounded by overwhelming forces in the most difficult country, and yet fought its way out with but small loss of life and material.

Lieut.-Col. Rex Osborne, D.S.O., M.C., commenting on this and the previous Amman raid, writes :

Lord Allenby's employment of large cavalry forces in such a country has clearly shown that not only is cavalry the most valuable arm for such operations but that it has not, nor will have, any competitor.

Their future in this rôle, and incidentally in all others, lies in close co-operation with the air. The cavalry is the "long arm," the aeroplane the "long eye," and probably the method of supply. At Es Salt the Australian Division was supplied with medical comforts by air. In Palestine aeroplanes succeeded in picking up written messages from cavalry without landing by means of grappling hooks.

Lord Allenby has written : "We used to hear, especially in peace manœuvres, that such and such a tract of country was suited to cavalry action. The truth is that cavalry can, and will, fit its tactics to any country. This has been shown repeatedly during the war just ended—in the rocky hills of Judæa . . . and the mountains of Moab."

The success of these raids into Moab must not be judged only by their material results. Liman von Sanders was himself a cavalry soldier ; this fact probably proved to his own disadvantage, and led him to overestimate the power of Desert Mounted Corps to obtain material results. He began to fear a raid on Deraa, 50 miles north of Amman, the most vital point of all his communications, and through which his entire force was maintained. He appears to have been convinced that Lord Allenby intended to break through via Amman to Deraa. He reinforced his 4th Army in its main position astride the road at Shunet Nimrin, making it practically equal in strength to the 7th and 8th Turkish Armies west of the Jordan. In doing so he stretched

his force on a front of 62 miles, thus weakening it everywhere. To maintain such a front he lowered his G.H.Q. reserves to a more than dangerous minimum, as the sequel proved.

Judged in the light of their influence on subsequent events these raids into Moab illustrate, in a unique way, the ultimate possibilities of the strategic cavalry raid.

CHAPTER XXI

IN THE VALLEY OF DEATH

THE R.G.H. now, in common with other troops of Gen. Allenby's command, had to undergo the ordeal of a summer in the Valley of the Jordan where it enters the Dead Sea. For those who accept the Old Testament literally and believe that two actual cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, were once in this region and were overwhelmed by Divine wrath because of their iniquities, this Valley of Death is clearly the place that would have been the site of those cities and of that punishment. For those who give a broader interpretation to the Old Testament it is just as clear that the story of Sodom and Gomorrah was needed to explain the awful desolation of the place. A deep hole in the ground, far below the level of the sea, its atmosphere pestilential and torrid, its surface an abomination of rocks, sand, thorns, and serpents, it comes near to being a hell on earth. As one officer of the R.G.H. wrote to his family after but two days' knowledge of it: "Of all the cursed spots of filthy, hideous, dusty country, give me the banks of the Jordan. Why John the Baptist ever selected such a God-forsaken, horrible spot I don't know. The flies are simply unbearable. There is no air, and it is deadly hot. Killed a large scorpion this morning and a snake. It is a loathsome spot."

Once the Dead Sea covered a greater area than at present, and the lower Jordan Valley is thus part of the bottom of an old sea. It is covered with a layer of white clay dust several feet deep, which is strongly impregnated with various salts. Each morning with the sun comes a strong wind from the north and lifts this vile, acrid dust

into choking clouds. Then for a little while the wind dies down, as if killed by the fierce heat of the sun, and there is a spell of roasting heat. Soon, however, the wind comes up again from the south and continues till late in the evening, and the afternoon wind is more violent than that of the morning, and raises "dust devils" of great height, which in their violence would sometimes tear up tents and lift them high into the air.

The average maximum daily temperature during July as taken on the top of the Tel-el-Sultan—Abu Tellul ridge, was 113.2° F. in the shade. The highest reading recorded during the month was 122° and the lowest 107°. Below the ridge the temperature was higher, and at Ghoraniyeh it reached 130° on several occasions. During August the temperature rose still higher.

The effect of the climate on the horses [writes Lieut.-Col. the Hon. R. M. Preston] was most remarkable. After about three weeks in the valley they became so tired and dispirited, though they had little or no work to do, that they could scarce drag themselves the mile or so to water and back again. An unceasing campaign was carried on by the medical staff against the malaria-bearing mosquitoes which infested the valley, and this undoubtedly did much to lessen the incidence of malaria, especially of the malignant type, among the troops. In spite of all efforts, however, the sick rate was high, as it was bound to be under such conditions. Deaths and evacuations of sick to hospital averaged about one per cent. of the total strength per day, which meant that the whole force in the valley would have to be replaced every three months. Actually, however, the alternate month in the hills enjoyed by the cavalry enabled many men who had been sent to hospital to recover in time to do another tour of duty in the valley. Curiously enough the Indian troops suffered more severely than did the British.

Mr. W. T. Massey, in his book *Allenby's Final Triumph*, writes :

Here in a country where few white men have lived during the summer a large number of white troops endured the agonies of awful heat and blinding sun, with the air so hot and dry at night that a shirt washed at midnight was bone dry at daybreak. There were scorpions, tarantulas, centipedes, and snakes. The

horned viper bit some men, and I heard we had deaths from snake bites. The heat was so frightful that it killed the flies. During August the Turks, who never believed it possible that white soldiers of the King could occupy the Jordan Valley in the hot months, sent over an aeroplane to drop a message : " This month flies die ; next month men die." That would have been true had we not taken sanitary precautions. All through the summer troops who were not in the line had little rest. They searched for pools of stagnant water, drained them, and oiled them, to suffocate in their breeding-places all malaria-carrying insects. They travelled far to rout out the pests, and a comparatively low sick rate was the reward. The heat was responsible for most of the sick cases, and it was absolutely necessary to make frequent changes in the troops holding the Jordan Valley line. As a rule three weeks was considered the limit beyond which men could not remain in the torrid heat without serious risk of their health, and they were then brought up to the sweeter atmosphere of the hills south of Bethlehem, where good water and an invigorating breeze again made them fit. During July and August I did not spend a night in the valley, but I was there several times in the heat of the day. It was dreadfully oppressive, and I never came out of it without a violent headache. The Dead Sea flotilla of motor-boats, the transport drivers who suffered from choking dust as well as from the heat, and whose work was much harassed by enemy bombs from the air, had a bad time, but so did everybody whose duty pinned him to the Jordan.

To cite one other witness—an Australian trooper : " Well, I reckon God made the Jordan Valley and when He seen what He done He threw stones at it."

The Jordan Valley in our official military handbook was said to be impossible for white occupation during the summer. " Nothing is known of the climate of the lower Jordan Valley in summer-time," said the handbook, " since no civilised human being has yet been found to spend a summer there." The valley indeed is abandoned during the summer even by the majority of its Arab population, the only inhabitants left there being the members of a degraded negroid tribe.

But Gen. Allenby's strategic plan made it absolutely necessary that a rule which had remained unbroken for many centuries should now be set aside. The white

troops of the British Army—those from the sunny climes of Australia and those from the soft climate of “green and cloudy England”—must occupy this Valley of Death during a whole summer. To have abandoned the valley would have been to abandon the marrow of his plan which was to persuade the Turks that his next great attack would be along the line of the Jordan instead of, as he actually designed, along the sea coast.

Nor was it the case that the troops had merely to stay in the Jordan Valley. They had to work there—the harsh, unrelenting labour of trench-digging, of patrolling, of care of horses, with also some fighting and constant watch against the enemy. That they went through with all this to the triumphant end was, on the whole, the greatest achievement in courage, discipline, and endurance of the whole campaign.

On May 5 in the afternoon the R.G.H. received orders to proceed by the Wadi Auja to the support of the 4th Battalion of the I.C.C. Brigade. They arrived at the Wadi Mallaheh in the evening, and on May 6 orders were received that the brigade should relieve that battalion. “A,” “B,” and “D” Squadrons, less the horse-holders, were conducted by guides to their positions in the immediate support of the Camel Corps posts. The relief was to be completed by 9 p.m., but during the day the situation became so critical, owing to the pressure of the enemy forces, that it was thought advisable by the officer commanding the I.C.C. Battalion, that the R.G.H. should not occupy the posts then held by the I.C.C. but should withdraw to a line farther back previously held by this battalion. The G.O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade assented to this arrangement, and accordingly the R.G.H. took post on the old line of the I.C.C. During the afternoon the 9th Hodson Horse came up in support, taking up a position on the left of the new line and joining on their left to the 4th Brigade. Later the 18th Bengal Lancers also came up in support.

“A” and “B” Squadrons were in their new positions

by the morning, but "D" Squadron, which had been the last to leave the old position, did not appear. It was subsequently ascertained that when the time came for their withdrawal to the new line they found that their pack horses had gone astray, and all stores, Hotchkiss guns, machine guns, small arm ammunition in reserve, had to be carried by the troops. After a strenuous night march under these conditions "D" Squadron arrived at the new line just before dawn and reported that they had come into contact with the enemy as they were preparing to withdraw and had inflicted some casualties.

During May 7 and 8 the position of the line was readjusted to some extent and active work was carried on, digging trenches and putting out wire. The routine orders were that all should stand to arms at 3.45 in the morning and not stand down until orders came from brigade headquarters. Enemy attacks were hourly expected, as there was no doubt that the Turks had been a great deal encouraged by our withdrawal from Es Salt. The days, however, passed very quietly so far as fighting was concerned, and work was steadily continued in consolidating the position. On May 10 the G.O.C. visited the line and framed a complete scheme of defence which necessitated heavy requisitions on the sappers for stakes, wire, and sandbags, and on the troops for labour.

This work of digging trenches and constructing fortifications under the weather conditions of the Jordan Valley in May soon had its effect on the R.G.H. As far as possible working hours were confined to the cooler times of the day—from 4.15 to 7.15 in the morning, and from 6 to 9 at night. But guard had always to be kept, and the enemy was able to move unseen amongst the scrub of the rocky gulleys along our line, so that it was impossible to know at what hour an attack might develop.

An officer's diary on these days:

Sunday, May 5.—We got orders at 2 p.m. to move in three quarters of an hour. Everything seems to be in a fearful hurry, and we all thought there was another attack on. The C.O.

goes on, and I follow with the regiment as fast as possible. We arrive at Wadi Auja and are then guided up along to Wadi Mallahéh, where we eventually arrive at 5 p.m. I have to drop guides at every turn to bring on our rear parties to Wadi Mallahéh and put down our horse lines for the night. The three squadrons are to take over from the I.C.C. at 3 a.m. next morning.

Monday, May 6.—Three squadrons go into line at 3 a.m., the camels remaining till night to come out. I take the led horses back to Wadi Mallahéh and pick a camp. The 9th and 18th Bengal Lancers arrive at 3 p.m. The Turks are very active, and altogether the positions are not satisfactory.

The positions occupied were under fire from Turks on a hill overlooking the R.G.H. posts. Any movement either in or out during the day naturally drew fire. Any relief had to be done at night, and there was no store of water or rations in the posts. Twice the enemy attacked but were held off. There were some casualties in the afternoon. The R.G.H. strength was considerably below that of the I.C.C. squadrons they were relieving, and the support some distance away consisted of a weak squadron who had been out since early dawn on a reconnaissance.

As no further support appeared to be available the Brigadier, at the C.O.'s request, decided to move back at night to the old line previously occupied by the I.C.C. Under cover of darkness the casualties were brought in and the squadrons occupied the new positions before dawn. A programme of wiring and trench digging was then actively undertaken.

The advance line of the British force in the Jordan was organised in two sectors. The left sector stretched from the foot of the Judæan Mountains along the north bank of the Wadi-el-Auja up to its junction with the Jordan, and embraced the bridge and the bridge-head there. The right sector extended from the mouth of the Wadi-el-Auja along the right bank of the Jordan to the Dead Sea, and included the bridges and the bridge-head at Ghoraniyeh. It was on the left sector that the R.G.H. had their posts.

By May 12 the effect of the awful weather and the heavy, constant work was being severely felt by the men.

The chief troubles were diarrhoea and septic sores. On May 11 eight men went to hospital, on May 12 six, and on May 13 seven. (This 13th of the month must have been regarded as a particularly unlucky date by two men who returned on that date from leave to England!) On May 14 the regiment was relieved in the front line by the 18th Bengal Lancers, but this relief only meant that the squadrons withdrew to the horse lines and remained in brigade support. Whilst in the support line the regiment found daily one patrol troop and one squadron to act against enemy aircraft. On May 16 the regiment was moved back to the 5th Mounted Brigade Headquarters (still in the Jordan Valley) and on May 17 bivouacked in the bed of the Wadi Auja. Large working parties had to be found for both the morning and evening tours of duty, and admissions to hospital continued at an alarming rate. By May 18 Lieut. E. C. Townsend and 42 O.R.'s had been admitted to hospital.

On May 19 the welcome announcement was made that a certain amount of leave to Egypt was to be allowed, and 2nd Lieut. Hookham and 6 O.R.'s were the first to have advantage of this. This good news seemed to have had a moral effect for a day or two, for there was a slight decrease in the number of men sent to hospital. On May 22 "A" and "B" Squadrons and the regimental H.Q. moved their camp from the bed of the wadi to take up a new bivouac on its north bank. The arrival of a draft of 17 O.R.'s and 29 remounts from the U.K. marked this day, and also the beginning of inoculations against cholera.

On May 23 it was announced that Sergt. R. Insoll, of "D" Squadron, had been awarded the Military Medal for his gallant action during the Es Salt operations, when, attacked by an enemy force three times the strength of his own little troop, he yet inflicted severe casualties on the enemy and withdrew with but one casualty.

On May 26 the regiment took over the line previously held by the 9th Hodson's Horse. The strength of the regiment when parading for this was 14 officers and 148

O.R.'s. Work was at once continued in digging trenches and constructing wire entanglements on the line just taken up.

And so the month went wearily by. The R.G.H. was now the only British regiment in the 5th Mounted Brigade, as the other white regiments were withdrawn to Jerusalem and Jaffa. The strength of the regiment, with unit in the field, on May 31 was: 18 officers, 325 O.R.'s, 345 horses, 41 mules, and 9 donkeys. The effective strength was 24 officers, 368 O.R.'s, 437 horses, 41 mules, and 10 donkeys. The battle casualties in action during the month were 16. Three officers and 113 O.R.'s had been sent to hospital during May.

June repeated the experience of May, except that the enemy attempted to add to our troubles by frequent air attacks and by long-range shelling. On June 2 Major A. C. Watson, D.S.O., 7th Hussars, took over the command of the regiment from Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., who was appointed commandant of a new officers' Prisoners of War Camp.

Frequent patrols relieved a little the tedium of the entrenching operations, and the G.O.C. brigade more than once expressed his satisfaction with the work done by the patrols. On June 16 the regiment was relieved in the front line by the 18th Bengal Lancers and moved to the horse lines, and on June 17 the regiment moved to the back area of the Jordan Valley and took up the various duties of a reserve regiment, such as providing guards and working parties. The enemy repeatedly shelled the regimental area, inflicting considerable casualties on the men and on the animals, so that on June 19 the camp was moved to a site on the north side of the bed of Wadi Auja, where cover was available from the fire of the Turkish artillery. It was observed with great satisfaction that the enemy guns continued to shell the old camp.

On June 20 the regiment's signal troop was re-formed, the strength now being one officer and 21 O.R.'s.

On June 23 the regiment was at last relieved from the

Jordan Valley by the 7th Australian Light Horse, and proceeded by easy stages to Talaat-ed-Dumm (the "Hill of Blood"), on the road towards Jerusalem. The strength of the regiment on relief after these seven weeks in the Jordan Valley was 13 officers and 376 O.R.'s.

The new camp was about a thousand feet higher than that occupied in the Wadi Auja, and this made a great change in the climatic conditions, which was greatly appreciated by all ranks.

On June 25 some very useful reconnaissance work was done by Lieut. F. J. Turner and Lieut. T. H. Inglis, with picked N.C.O.'s surveying roads from the Talaat-ed-Dumm camp towards the Ghoraniyeh Bridge and on both banks of the Jordan as far as the Auja Bridge. The purpose of this was to prepare for the contingency of having to reinforce the front line in an emergency. The R.G.H. throughout the campaign paid particular importance to this reconnaissance work, and the fact that a new, practicable track had been discovered during the retirement from Es Salt was of great advantage.

On June 28 the regiment received orders in the evening to return to the Jordan Valley and to be there in a state of readiness to turn out at an hour's notice to reinforce the front line if required. The marching out strength was 10 officers, 366 O.R.'s, and 476 animals. The regiment remained until the end of the month in the back area of the Jordan Valley and then moved back to Talaat-ed-Dumm on June 30. The effective strength at that time was 22 officers, 415 O.R.'s, 464 horses, 41 mules, and 7 donkeys, and the strength of the unit in the field was 10 officers, 355 O.R.'s, 427 horses, 41 mules, and 6 donkeys.

July brought a most welcome relief for the regiment. On the first day of the month a Rest Camp party consisting of Capt. Sandy and 76 O.R.'s left for Port Said and Lieut. Hookham and 2 O.R.'s left for Jerusalem Rest Camp, and the remainder of the regiment took the road for Bethlehem.

By the night of July 2, or rather early in the morning

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of the next day, the regiment arrived at Khurbet Beit Sawn, having marched all night, and settled down there in camp. On the road a draft of 2nd Lieut. H. Gaydon and 4 O.R.'s were picked up from Jerusalem Camp.

The first few days in the new camp were marked by a number of admissions to hospital of men suffering from the effects of the stay in the Jordan Valley camp, but with the better climatic conditions the health of the regiment improved rapidly. The camp was very quickly put in order, and a bazaar was established to facilitate the sale of produce by the natives. Leave for parties to visit Jerusalem and Bethlehem was freely given.

On July 8 news was received of the death at Alexandria of Major G. N. Horlick of malignant malaria. Before he took over the command of the 16th Machine Gun Section Major Horlick had served with the R.G.H. in various capacities, and by his gallantry and his devotion to duty had made himself esteemed by all ranks.

There was on July 14 a dismal order to prepare to move down to the Jordan Valley at once. This was shortly afterwards modified to an order to prepare to move at an hour's notice, and in the evening the movement order was cancelled, the situation in the Jordan Valley having cleared up. The regiment heard afterwards that the enemy had made a serious attack. Three battalions of German infantry were detailed to carry out this attack with the support of the 53rd and 24th Turkish divisions. Early on the morning of July 14 the enemy concentration was noticed in the wadis north-west of Abu Tellul. Their attack began at 3.30 a.m. and was at first successful, as they penetrated between our advance posts and seized Abu Tellul, thus cutting off our positions farther north at El Musallabeh. But these advanced posts, with one exception, though they were surrounded, held their ground. At 4.30 a.m. the 1st A.L.H. Brigade counter-attacked, regained Abu Tellul, and drove the enemy against our advanced posts. Thus held between two fires the enemy forces suffered severely and left in our hands

276 Germans (including 12 officers) and 62 Turks. At the same time a Turkish force of some strength concentrated opposite El Henu Ford, which is midway between the El Ghoraniyeh bridge-head and the Dead Sea. Our cavalry moved out to counter-attack, and, being favoured by the ground, arrived at within charging distance before they were observed. About 100 Turks were killed, and 91, including six officers, were captured. The severe lesson that the Germans and Turks got on this day prevented them from making any further serious attack on our Jordan Valley positions.

On July 17 orders came to relieve the Anzac Division in the Valley. The brigade left Khurbet Beit Sawn on July 17 and halted near Rest Camp, Jerusalem, and arrived at Kilo at 1 o'clock the next morning. The Wadi Nueiameh was reached on July 18 and the regiment moved into the camp vacated by the New Zealand Canterbury Rifles. The situation was all clear, and for the next few days the regiment took up the old routine of the Jordan Valley, providing patrols and working parties. There were daily admissions to hospital, and during the month 2 officers and 52 O.R.'s entered hospital.

On July 31 the strength of the regiment, with unit in the field, was 18 officers, 352 O.R.'s, 406 horses, 55 mules, and 7 donkeys. The effective strength was 23 officers, 406 O.R.'s, 454 horses, 55 mules, and 7 donkeys.

CHAPTER XXII

PREPARING FOR THE FINAL BLOW

THE regiment held its post at the Wadi Nueiameh, in the Jordan Valley, until August 3, when it was relieved by the Worcester Yeomanry and marched to Talaat-ed-Dumm.

On August 4 the Regiment marched out from Talaat-ed-Dumm to Solomon's Pools, a new camp, which was reached at 2 o'clock in the morning of August 5 after a march of 20 miles. On the road 19 reinforcements were picked up from the Rest Camp, Jerusalem, and on August 6 at Solomon's Pools 38 O.R.'s arrived as reinforcements from Rest Camp, Jerusalem. Major A. C. Watson, D.S.O., was appointed Acting-Lieut.-Col. whilst in command of the regiment.

A great deal of work was done in improving the camp and making necessary pathways and roads and setting up a drill ground and a riding school.

On August 9 2nd Lieut. L. G. Stanley reported for duty and was posted to "A" Squadron.

Training work in signalling, musketry, the Hotchkiss gun, riding, and squadron drill was pursued with diligence, and classes were also instituted for observers and stretcher-bearers. Leave to visit Jerusalem and Bethlehem was granted freely, and occasional drafts of men were sent down to El Arish Camp on the beach, for a change of air, until on August 14 an epidemic broke out at El Arish and leave parties to that camp were cancelled. The health of the regiment greatly improved during its stay in this camp.

A certain amount of voluntary training in sword drill by officers was carried on under Lieut.-Col. Watson. The R.G.H. had of course been trained in, and armed with, the sword from the beginning of the campaign, but the

Australian and New Zealand Mounted Brigades, which had been trained as mounted infantry and were now for the first time armed with the sword, had to carry on intensive drill to familiarise themselves with the use of that weapon.

On August 18 Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., rejoined and took over second-in-command of the regiment. On August 19 an advance party was sent to Enab under Lieut. Townsend, and on August 20 the rest of the regiment left the Solomon's Pools area at 6.30 p.m. for Wadi Henain. Jerusalem was reached after a march of two hours, and the regiment halted there for supper. Enab was reached at 1.30 a.m. after a night march of 18 miles under brilliant moonlight—one of the pleasantest marches that the regiment had yet had. A dismounted party of 43 O.R.'s under Lieut. Wilson had moved by lorries, taking with them all surplus baggage and the mounted men were free from all but necessary impedimenta. The regiment rested at Enab during August 21, and left there at 7.15 p.m. for the Wadi Henain, arriving there at 4 a.m. after a march of 26 miles. At this stage of the campaign all marching of troops forward was done by night, in pursuance of the elaborate plan Gen. Allenby had made to conceal the development of his intended attack in the coastal area.

On August 22 the 5th Mounted Brigade left the Australian Mounted Division and became the 13th Cavalry Brigade of the newly organised 5th Cavalry Division. This Division was constituted as follows:

Commander, Major-Gen. H. J. M. MacAndrew, C.B., D.S.O.

*13th Cavalry Brigade (late 5th Mounted Brigade).—*Commander, Bt. Lieut.-Col. (temp. Brig.-Gen.) P. J. V. Kelly, C.M.G., D.S.O., 3rd Hussars (relinquished October, 1918), afterwards Bt. Lieut.-Col. (temp. Brig.-Gen.) G. A. Weir, D.S.O., 3rd Dragoon Guards; 1/1st R.G.H., 9th Hodson's Horse, 18th Bengal Lancers, 13th Cavalry Brigade Signal Troop, R.E., 19th Machine Gun Squadron.

*14th Cavalry Brigade (late 7th Mounted Brigade).—*Commander, Lieut.-Col. (temp. Brig.-Gen.) G. V. Clarke, D.S.O., City of London Yeomanry; 1/1st Sherwood Rangers, 20th Deccan Horse, 34th Poona Horse, 14th Cavalry Brigade Signal Troop, R.E., 20th Machine Gun Squadron.

*15th (Imperial Service) Cavalry Brigade (late I.S. Cavalry Brigade).—*Commander, Major (temp. Brig.-Gen.) C. R. Harbord, D.S.O., 30th Lancers, I.A.; Jodhpore I.S. Lancers, Mysore I.S. Lancers, 1st Hyderabad I.S. Lancers, 15th Kathiawar I.S. Signal Troop, Imperial Service Machine Gun Squadron.

Divisional Troops.—Essex Battery, R.H.A., and Brigade Ammunition Column (less two sections), 5th Field Squadron (late No. 7), R.E., 5th Cavalry Division Signal Squadron, R.E., 5th Cavalry Divisional Train (Nos. 1103, 1044, 1104, 1105 Companies, R.A.S.C.), 13th, 14th, and 15th (I.S.) Cavalry Brigade Mobile Veterinary Sections.

On August 23 Lieut. R. U. White joined the regiment, and on August 24 Capt. R. F. Barnett, who was posted in command of "B" Squadron. The month passed quietly as regards the rank and file, but the officers were engaged constantly in preparation for the great attack. Influenza was very prevalent among the troops, and in order to nurse their strength drill and training were cut down as far as possible. Port Said Rest Camp parties were no longer detailed because of the prevalence of influenza at the camp there. At the end of August the strength of the regiment, with unit in the field, was 21 officers, 414 O.R.'s, 462 horses, 51 mules, and 5 donkeys. The effective strength was 28 officers, 477 O.R.'s, 478 horses, 52 mules, and 5 donkeys. The officers admitted to the hospital during the month were two, and O.R.'s 68.

It will be convenient at this point to describe briefly the plan which Gen. Allenby had formed for his final attack and the steps which he was taking to mask his preparations. The essence of the plan was that Gen.

Liman von Sanders, the German who was in command of the Turkish and German forces facing us, should be convinced that we intended a northwards thrust by the Valley of the Jordan towards Amman. So whilst keeping a holding force in the Jordan Valley, we were concentrating our main offensive strength on the coastal sector, to beat the enemy out of his strong entrenchments there and through the gap thus formed to pour the cavalry northward along the coast to a point at which they could turn east and occupy the rear of the Turkish position. Our infantry were to batter through the Turkish line and then pivot round towards the East, driving the enemy forces up towards the hills and penning them up there, thus keeping the route clear for our mounted troops to occupy positions in the rear of the enemy lines.

The Turkish line on the coastal sector ran from the coast at a point just north of the old Crusader fortress of Arsuf over the coastal plain to Jiljulie, near the rail-head at Kalkili. From there it ran across the mountains eastward, passing through Mesha, Furkha, and El Lubban to the Jordan at Umm-el-Shert. Forty miles north of this line was the plain of Armageddon and the Valley of Jezreel, which cut a passage right through the mountain range from the sea to the River Jordan from Haifa, on the coast to Beisan (which is about 15 miles south of the Sea of Galilee and four miles west of the Jordan). From Haifa to Beisan a railway line passed through Afule, and from Afule a branch line ran south to Jenin and thence to Samaria and Nablus.

Gen. Allenby describes his intentions thus :

At the beginning of September I estimated the strength of the IVth, VIIth, and VIIIth Turkish Armies to be 23,000 rifles, 3,000 sabres, and 340 guns. The IVth Army (6,000 rifles, 2,000 sabres, and 74 guns) faced my forces in the Jordan Valley ; the 7th Army held a front of some 20 miles astride the Jerusalem—Nablus road with 7,000 rifles and 111 guns, while the 8th Army front extended from Furkha to the sea, and was held by 10,000 rifles and 157 guns.

In addition, the garrison of Maan and the posts on the Hedjaz railway north of it consisted of some 6,000 rifles and 30 guns.

The enemy's general reserve, only 3,000 rifles in strength, with 30 guns, was distributed between Tiberias, Nazareth, and Haifa.

Thus his total strength amounted to some 4,000 sabres, 32,000 rifles, and 400 guns, representing a ration strength, south of the line Rayak—Beirut, of 104,000.

I had at my disposal two cavalry divisions, two mounted divisions, seven infantry divisions, an Indian infantry brigade, four unallotted battalions, and the French detachment (the equivalent of an infantry brigade, with other arms attached)—a total, in the fighting line, of some 12,000 sabres, 57,000 rifles, and 540 guns.

I had thus a considerable superiority in numbers over the enemy, especially in mounted troops.

I was anxious to gain touch with the Arab forces east of the Dead Sea, but the experience gained in the raids which I had undertaken against Amman and Es Salt in March and May had proved that the communications of a force in the hills of Moab were liable to interruption as long as the enemy were able to transfer troops from the west to the east bank of the Jordan. This he was in a position to do, as he controlled the crossing at Jisr-ed-Damieh.

The defeat of the VIIth and VIIIth Turkish Armies west of the Jordan would enable me to control this crossing. Moreover, the destruction of these armies, which appeared to be within the bounds of possibility, would leave the IVth Army isolated if it continued to occupy the country south and west of Amman. I determined, therefore, to strike my blow west of the Jordan.

With the exception of a small and scattered reserve, the whole of the Turkish force west of the Jordan was enclosed in a rectangle 45 miles in length and only 12 miles in depth. The northern edge of this rectangle was a line from Jisr-ed-Damieh on the Jordan, through Nablus and Tul Keram, to the sea. All the enemy's communications to Damascus ran northwards from the eastern half of this line, converging on El Afule and Beisan some 25 miles to the north. Thence, with the exception of the roads leading from El Afule along the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, his communications ran eastwards up the valley of the Yarmuk to Deraa, the junction of the Palestine and Hedjaz railways.

Thus El Afule, Beisan, and Deraa were the vital points on his communications. If they could be seized the enemy's retreat would be cut off. Deraa was beyond my reach, but not beyond that of mobile detachments of the Arab army. It was not to be

expected that these detachments could hold this railway junction, but it was within their power to dislocate all traffic.

El Afule, in the Plain of Esdraelon, and Beisan, in the Valley of Jezreel, were within reach of my cavalry, provided the infantry could break through the enemy's defensive systems and create a gap for the cavalry to pass through. It was essential that this gap should be made at the commencement of operations, so that the cavalry might reach their destinations, 45 and 60 miles distant, before the enemy could make his escape. Moreover, whichever route the cavalry followed the hills of Samaria, or their extension towards Mount Carmel, had to be crossed before the Plain of Esdraelon and the Valley of Jezreel could be reached ; and it was most important that the enemy should not be given time to man the passes.

For this reason I decided to make my main attack in the coastal plain rather than through the hills north of Jerusalem. In the hills the ground afforded the enemy positions of great natural strength, and taxed the physical energy of the attackers to the utmost. The operations in March, astride the Jerusalem-Nablus road, had proved that an advance of five miles in one day, in face of determined opposition, was the most that could be expected. A far more rapid and decisive advance than this was necessary. In addition, the route along the coast would enable the cavalry to pass through the hills of Samaria into the Plain of Esdraelon at their narrowest point, thus ensuring greater speed and less likelihood of being checked. The supply of a large force of troops in the plain also presented fewer difficulties.

By reducing the strength of the troops in the Jordan Valley to a minimum, and by withdrawing my reserves from the hills north of Jerusalem, I was able to concentrate five divisions and the French detachment, with a total of 383 guns, for the attack on these defences. Thus on the front of the attack I was able to concentrate some 35,000 rifles against 8,000, and 383 guns against 130. In addition, two cavalry and one Australian mounted divisions were available for this front.

The carrying out of this plan called for one of the greatest feats of concealment of movement ever attempted by an army in the field. It was necessary to concentrate our main forces on the coast whilst leaving the enemy convinced that it was concentrated in the Jordan Valley. The force in the Jordan Valley, in the interests of the great deception, made frequent demonstrations of attack, engaged in a great amount of unnecessary railway and

bridging work, and exercised various ingenious expedients to give the impression that it was being strongly reinforced. A unit would move its camp and leave the old camp standing. Dummy horses were made up out of army blankets and poles, which were left standing in little groups to give the impression from the air of horse lines. The abandoned camps were then left in charge of one or two men, who were very industrious in lighting fires, moving about constantly, and raising dust. Every day a force of infantry marched down the Jerusalem-Jericho road from Talaat-ed-Dumm into the Jordan Valley. During the night the same force moved back secretly by motor lorries, and the next day marched back again into the valley. This continuous promenade fell to the lot of the British West Indies (negro) Regiment, and the men entered very heartily into the fun of their somewhat arduous task. The impression given to enemy observers was that of a great infantry and cavalry concentration in the valley.

The next step was to invent a removal of our G.H.Q. to Jerusalem. Buildings were requisitioned there, and no concealment was attempted of the elaborate preparations for the setting up of Gen. Allenby's staff. This, of course, leaked through to the enemy, and helped the impression of a great attack by the Jordan Valley, since Jerusalem was obviously the best centre from which that could be directed.

But it was on the coastal sector that the work of camouflage was of primary importance, and here the R.A.F. was of vital importance. The Commander-in-Chief acknowledged this in his despatch of October 31, 1918, when he reported :

The chief factor in the secrecy maintained must be attributed, however, to the supremacy in the air which had been obtained by the Royal Air Force. The process of wearing down the enemy's aircraft had been going on all through the summer. During one week in June 100 hostile aeroplanes had crossed our lines. During the last week in August this number had decreased to 18. In the

next few days a number were shot down, with the result that only four ventured to cross our lines during the period of concentration.

With enemy observation from the air thus denied, one complete division of infantry was changed over from the hilly country to the plains, their cavalry divisions were brought from out of the Jordan Valley to the coastal sector, and a great concentration of heavy and field artillery was effected. Mr. W. T. Massey, in his *Allenby's Final Triumph*, gives a good picture of the methods adopted for concealment :

In the 21st Corps area the precautions to prevent observation of what was going on were extraordinarily complete. No movement of the troops into the area was permitted between 4.30 in the morning and 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Upon every man was impressed the importance of absolute concealment, so that the enemy should not detect him from the air or from their lines. Special police were mounted by all units to stop movements in concealed bivouacs during daylight. The police carried field glasses, and on the approach of a hostile or doubtful aeroplane blew four blasts on a whistle, whereupon every man had to remain absolutely stationary. All ration dumps were kept in the bivouac areas, and no fires were lighted, all cooking being done by solidified alcohol to prevent smoke issuing from field kitchens. Horses were generally watered by bucket, but where animals had to be taken from their hiding-places for this purpose strict rule prescribed that this should be done between noon and 2 o'clock, when the Royal Air Force arranged to have fighting patrols in the air to keep away enemy aircraft. Special roads were made into and out of each bivouac area and none other could be used. No enemy aeroplanes could be fired at from concealed bivouacs, no lights were to be shown at night, and the visits of staff officers and despatch riders were kept down to a minimum. For a fortnight preceding the offensive no new tents were pitched, and all tents then standing were kept up, whether occupied or not. When out-going troops took their bivouac shelters with them incoming troops had to pitch theirs in the same places. There were open as well as concealed bivouacs. The former were camps which had been in existence for some time. The enemy was accustomed to see these, and in them men were allowed to move about freely, except in the case where the size of the camps had been increased by the addition of more

troops, when care had to be exercised to prevent the enemy discovering the increase. Concealed bivouacs were usually in orange groves. The greatest precautions had to be taken in the use of telegraphs and telephones, and nothing even remotely connected with operations or movements of troops was mentioned in any message sent by wire. To prevent water shortage there was strict water discipline. Any body of troops which had not completed its march by 4.30 in the morning had to halt under the nearest cover until the evening, and if any column heard a night-flying aeroplane it would halt and remain stationary until the plane had passed.

These regulations were adhered to in the spirit as well as the letter. The men took a sporting interest in them. They were told that the success of the operations depended largely on surprising the enemy, and that it was to their own advantage that the Turks should know nothing of their movements. Troops in the cool shades of the orange groves were encouraged to take rest during the day, and there was rarely an occasion for the police to admonish a man for breaking bounds. So the casual observer saw nothing which would lead him to believe an attack was about to materialise. Spies existed within our lines, no doubt—in a mixed population there were bound to be people who had sympathies for the Turk or who would work in his interest for money—but as far as we could tell they either knew nothing about what was going on or were entirely mystified by it, and civilian spies, if there were any, told the Turks nothing that was of any use at this period. In one portion of the Turkish line, however, they did know something of what was impending. I got the story from an officer on the staff of the 21st Corps who was in Tulkeram—the former headquarters of the Turkish 8th Army—soon after the 60th Division entered the place, and this is the first time it has appeared in print. The officer told me that one of the first documents they had captured was a statement made by an Indian soldier, a religious fanatic, who had deserted to the Turks a few hours before we started to break through. The deserter had given the information that an attack was about to take place, but it was received too late to be of any service to the Turkish general headquarters, for at 1.30 in the morning our only Handley-Page, piloted by Ross Smith, the Australian aviator who won the distinction of being the first flying man to navigate a machine through the air from London to the Antipodes, dropped bombs on the signal station at El Afule and completely destroyed telegraphic communication between Turkish Army Headquarters and the front. I was told that not only did we capture the document, but among the prisoners secured at

Tulkeram we took the Indian soldier who made the statement. He was shot. Not merely did all the movements of troops towards the coast take place at night for a long time before the concentration was completed, but to deceive the enemy some movements in the opposite direction were carried out in daylight.

There was some humour in the schemes devised to deceive all and sundry. A British officer who occupied an important post in the civil administration of Jaffa had secured a desirable residence there, and he proposed to bring his wife to winter in the town. A General, however, told him he should require his house for the winter months, and the officer pointed out how inconvenient it would be to move at the moment. But the reply was that military necessities came first, and the officer, forced to renew his house-hunting, no doubt discussed his difficulty with Jaffa people on his staff, who in turn would talk the matter over with their friends. The same General visited the house of a Jewish gentleman in Jaffa, and, admiring the premises, told the owner he would take them as his winter quarters. The owner vainly pleaded he could not find another place, and then refused to budge, threatening the General that he would have a question asked in the House of Commons about the matter. The General only smiled, and left the householder under the impression that the military would while away the winter under his roof. Here was more food for talk in Jaffa, and when the attack came and thousands of troops (whose presence meant wealth to the Jaffa traders) disappeared into the country a long way north, and among them the General himself, people were astonished at what they thought must be a complete change in the Commander-in-Chief's plans.

Still further to encourage the belief that if there was to be an attack it would come on the east, a brigade of the 7th Indian Division left the coast early in September and marched for three days up the Jerusalem road as far as Enab. They marched eastwards by daylight and returned by night. The 3rd and 7th Division were converted from wheeled transport to pack transport, and consequently there was considerable movement to and from Ludd, the large depôt at our rail-head. These movements were carried out by day towards Ludd, and by night in the opposite direction. In order to prepare for the advance it was necessary to build four new bridges over the Auja, which empties itself into the Mediterranean four or five miles north of Jaffa. It was hard to build bridges without creating suspicion in the minds of the Turks that they were to be used in a forward movement, but a scheme was devised about six weeks before the attack to establish schools for bridging instruction. One of these

operated at Ferekiyeh and the other near Sheik Muannis, close to the coast, and at both these places it was intended to bridge the river. These schools were continually building bridges and then dismantling them, and finally, when the bridges were required, they were left in position. Desert Mounted Corps would require two bridges near the mill at Jerisheh, and these were made by the 21st Corps and swung back along the bank of the river, where long grasses hid them from any but low-flying aeroplanes.

During the first days of September the R.G.H. repeated the routine of August. On September 1 a draft of 31 O.R.'s (reinforcements) and 35 remounts came into camp, and on September 2 a draft of 11 O.R.'s rejoined from hospital, and on September 3 the Port Said Rest Camp party (Lieut. Turner, 2nd Lieut. Cornwall, and 35 O.R.'s) came back. On September 4 Lieut. R. M. Holden reported for duty with the regiment, and on September 5 Capt. W. Sebag-Montefiore rejoined from the 5th Cavalry Division, but a day later was detached to the 13th Cavalry Brigade for staff duties. Reinforcements had now brought each squadron to over 120 in strength.

Training was now directed to putting a final polish on all ranks for the big task in front, and comprised co-operation with aircraft, formations for advancing under artillery fire, shock action, and crossing rivers under fire.

On September 10 a composite regiment made up of two troops of "D" and one troop each of "A" and "B" Squadrons represented the R.G.H. at a distribution of decorations by the C.-in-C. of the forces. Capt. R. F. Barnett was in charge of the squadron. The following officers and O.R.'s in this regiment were presented with ribands: Lieut.-Col. A. C. Watson, D.S.O., Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., Sergt. Bromhead, D.C.M., Sergt. R. Insoll, M.M., Lce. Corpl. J. Lane, M.M. Capt. A. G. Wykeham-Musgrave was unable to be present as he was in hospital.

On September 15 Lieut. Stanley proceeded to Divisional Details to take over duties during operations. Capt. E. T. Cripps vacated the post of Adjutant to take up staff

duties with the 20th Corps, and 2nd Lieut. E. Lawrance assumed the duties of Adjutant and 2nd Lieut. A. C. Adams of Signal Officer.

On September 17 the eagerly-awaited orders to move forward came, and the regiment marched by night to some orange groves at Sarona (near Jaffa), where it was to rest concealed until the next day. During September 18 no unnecessary noise and no movement outside the orange groves was allowed. Fires could not be lit and any cooking was done by methylated spirits. Between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. some slight relaxation of concealment was allowed, for during those two hours our Royal Air Force held the sky and guaranteed that no enemy aircraft should come across our lines.

Meanwhile Gen. Allenby had put the final touches on his artistic plan. The Arab forces far away across the Jordan were called upon to co-operate. The enemy's railway communications at Deraa were attacked by the Royal Air Force, and by the Mobile Column of the Arab army, which, after concentrating at Kasr-el-Azrak, 50 miles east of Amman, had moved into the Hauran. The enemy railway line and station buildings at Deraa were attacked by the Royal Air Force on September 16 and 17. On September 16 the Arab column (which had been joined by the Shalaan sections of the Roalla, Anazeh, and by a number of Druses) attacked the Hedjaz railway, 15 miles south of Deraa, destroying a bridge and a section of the railway. On the following day the line was attacked both north and west of Deraa, extensive demolitions being carried out. As the result of these demolitions all through traffic to Palestine ceased, and a considerable quantity of transport, which had been intended for the Hedjaz, was diverted to bridge the break in the railway.

Finally in the very early hours of September 19 El Afule and the headquarters of the Turkish VIIth and VIIIth Armies at Nablus and Tulkerain were bombed by the Royal Air Force with a view to disorganising their signal communications. The first of our planes to leave on

this mission was a big Handley-Page bomber. The pilot was Capt. Ross Smith, who later on was to add to his famous war record by being the first pilot to fly from England to Australia. At 1.30 on September 19 he set out for El Afule, where the Turks had their chief signal station. Their general headquarters were at Nazareth, on the hills a few miles north of El Afule, and through the latter little railway town all wires passed from G.H.Q. to Army H.Q. at Tulkeram and Nablus, and to Corps H.Q. nearer the line. Ross Smith's mission was to destroy these means of communication. He dropped his bombs from a low altitude, and when the cavalry got to El Afule they found in three bomb craters the broken ends of practically every telegraph and telephone wire between G.H.Q. and the front. The British squadron stationed near the German colony at Sarona, two or three miles north of Jaffa, had a curious rôle—to prevent the German Air Force getting up from their aerodrome at Jenin. Two of our machines went out together and sat up above the Jenin aerodrome for an hour and a half at a time until relieved by another couple. The machines were fitted with special bomb racks to carry four 20lbs. bombs, and directly any movement was noticeable on the aerodrome they sent down a bomb. The German pilots were kept to earth all day. Thus the enemy was blinded, in complete ignorance of the annihilating blow which was to come upon him within a few hours.

CHAPTER XXIII

BY ARMAGEDDON TO NAZARETH

It may be accepted as a maxim that when a General in the field writes a long despatch he has not done so well as he hoped and finds explanations necessary. When he is fully victorious he can afford to be, and usually is, laconic. Cæsar's "*Veni, vidi, vici*" and Napier's "*Peccavi*" ("I have Scinde") may not be strictly authentic, but they illustrate the maxim. Gen. Allenby, in his despatch on the week's fighting, which opened on September 19 and closed on September 25, could well be brief. He reported :

The first phase was of short duration. In 36 hours, between 4.30 a.m. on September 19 and 5 o'clock p.m. on September 20, the greater part of the VIIIth Turkish Army had been overwhelmed, and the troops of the VIIth Army were in full retreat through the hills of Samaria, whose exits were already in the hands of my cavalry.

In the second phase the fruits of this success were reaped. The infantry, pressing relentlessly on the heels of the retreating enemy, drove him into the arms of my cavalry, with the result that practically the whole of the VIIth and VIIIth Turkish Armies were captured, with their guns and transport.

This phase also witnessed the capture of Haifa and Acre, and the occupation of Tiberias and of the country to the south and west of the Sea of Galilee.

As the result of the rout of the VIIth and VIIIth Armies the IVth Turkish Army, east of the Jordan, retreated, and Maan was evacuated.

The third phase commenced with the pursuit of this army by Chaytor's force, and closed with the capture of Amman and the interception of the retreat of the garrison of Maan, which surrendered.

It is necessary to add but little to that summary of the general success before turning attention to the rôle of the cavalry, and especially of the cavalry in the coastal sector. At 4.30 a.m. the 400 guns which had been concentrated on our front, assisted by fire from a squadron of destroyers, opened their fierce bombardment. For 15 minutes its hail of death fell on the enemy, and then the infantry moved forward. Meanwhile the 5th Cavalry Division, which was to push through to the enemy's rear on the coast sector, and the 4th Cavalry Division, which was to push through at Mukhalid, had moved forward to posts of readiness just behind the infantry. Part of the 5th Division was the 13th Brigade (made up of the R.G.H. and two regiments of Indian cavalry), and to this 13th Brigade was given the post of honour as vanguard. Its objective was Nazareth—the G.H.Q. of the enemy force.

It was expected that the infantry would have "opened the gate" by 10 in the morning, but so overwhelming was its attack and so complete the surprise of the enemy that at eight minutes past 5 the front line was taken and before 6 the infantry could wheel round to pen the enemy up against the hills and to make an open road for the cavalry. On the right, in the foothills, the French Tirailleurs and the Armenians of the Légion d'Orient advanced with great dash, and captured the Kh. Deir-el-Kussis ridge. On their left the 54th Division stormed Kefr Kasim village and wood, and the foothills overlooking the railway from Ras-el-Ain to Jiljulieh. North of Kefr Kasim the advance was checked for a time at Sivri Tepe, but the enemy's resistance was quickly overcome, and the remaining hills south of the Wadi Kanah captured. In the coastal plain the 3rd (Lahore) Division attacked the enemy's first system between Bir Adas and the Hadrah road. On its left the 75th Division attacked the Tabsor defences, the 7th (Meerut) Division the works west of Tabsor, while the 60th Division attacked along the coast.

The R.G.H. rested, hidden away in their orange groves, until the evening of September 18, when with the rest of the 13th Brigade it marched to the sea coast and halted at a point about one and a half miles south of Arsuf. Horses were watered from troughs which had been erected during the day, and lines were put down in column of troops. The position was an extremely good one, there being high cliffs all along the seashore, which afforded good cover against enemy shells coming over. But the enemy was in complete ignorance of the concentration, and nothing happened to disturb the night.

By midnight the whole of the 5th Division had come up to the assembly-place and it was an inspiring sight to see such a mass of horses in column of troops stretching for over three and a half miles along the beach.

The artillery bombardment at 4.30 a.m. on September 19, for those of the troops who had not had service in France—and that was the great majority—was the most splendidly dreadful thing of their war experience. The flashes of guns were so continuous as to give a light which was almost unbroken. It flickered, but it never failed. The earth quivered and shook with the repeated shocks of the guns. The air was like a tattered, hunted thing, torn wisps of it blown hither and thither by the constant explosions.

With the first roar of the guns the regiment was eager to be off, though, according to the original plan, they had some time yet to wait. A meal was served out, but it was hardly touched by the men. The horses seemed to share the general feeling of tense expectancy and to fret to be off. This was the beginning of the last great march, the end of which was home. The C.O. went forward with the Brigade Commander, and Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., took charge of the regiment. At 5.50 a.m. the order to mount was given, and at 6 o'clock the advance commenced, long before the expected time.

A great moment this for the R.G.H.—the only British regiment in the vanguard. All the tedium and hardship

and danger of that long, long march from the canal were forgotten, forgotten early trials and misunderstandings, forgotten the horrors of the Jordan Valley. They were embarked now on the greatest adventure that ever fell to the lot of cavalry in modern times, and they pressed forward with supreme confidence in their commander and a lively hope that it would be their fortune to play a good part in the crowning mercy that he had planned.

As the cavalry moved forward signs of victory were soon seen in numbers of prisoners passing to the rear. At 7 o'clock the regiment passed through the Turkish front line. Trenches were completely obliterated, and twisted barbed wire spoke of the effects of our bombardment. Then came many batches of prisoners, and parties of our troops clearing up wreckage and laying cables for maintaining communications.

The head of the brigade cleared the beach and debouched into the open country. A few shells came, but without doing any damage. The regiment again came under shell fire at Nahr-el-Falik at 7.50 a.m., but the shooting was very erratic and no casualties were inflicted. The 9th Hodson's Horse Lancers were doing the advance to the brigade, and groups of dead Turks encountered by the R.G.H. spoke eloquently of their lance work.

The regiment halted in the Wadi Ain-el-Yezek for about ten minutes at 9.40 a.m. to allow the advance guard to clear the village of Mukhalid, where a lively fight was in progress. This place was soon cleared and the regiment moved forward in troop column at the canter. Shell fire now came from the north-north-west, and a patrol from "B" Squadron was sent out to reconnoitre the position of the guns. Corpl. Wiseman with four men was detailed for this work, and proceeded on his mission. "A" Squadron under Capt. Butler, was sent out as right flank guard to the brigade, and succeeded in capturing a large number of prisoners, who were sent back under escort. This squadron also rounded up a huge drove of camels, but these had to be left to the people in rear to secure.

Batches of prisoners were sent back in lots of 20 or 30 under small escorts.

The flank guard at this time went out too wide, and patrols were sent to bring them into touch again, but the flank squadron was found to be engaged with the enemy some miles to the right. "D" Squadron was sent out to do the flank guard, orders being sent to "A" Squadron to rejoin the regiment so soon as it was finished with its little action, which it eventually did at Liktera. Corpl. Wiseman rejoined his squadron and reported that he had found two enemy guns in the act of limbering up. He had at once charged with his patrol, and the officer in charge surrendered the guns, with 20 men. Whilst Corpl. Wiseman was reporting the capture of these guns Pte. Forrest, of "B" Squadron, saw a large column moving away to the north. He galloped straight at the moving column, which halted on his approach and surrendered. The column consisted of 37 waggons, 4 officers, and 100 men. Pte. Forrest turned them about and escorted them to the rear. It was a big capture for one man!

On the beach the going had been very heavy and hard for the horses, but after turning into the plain the country was mostly turf and the cavalry simply cantered on, taking in their stride every obstacle that the retreating Turks tried to set up and sending the huge batches of prisoners back with the smallest of escorts.

At 11.30 the brigade reached Liktera and made a further large haul of prisoners and material. This transport and supply dépôt was chiefly manned by Germans. It was taken completely by surprise, and hardly a shot was fired. Sergt. Castle did some good work here in rounding up several motor-lorries, which were escaping, filled with German mechanics. All of these men seemed astonished at our appearance, and surrendered without protest. 2nd Lieut. R. U. White and a troop were detached just before entering the supply dépôt to make a further search of the village, and succeeded

in making an important capture of a complete training establishment, including the Commandant, several officers, and about 400 men, including many Germans.

The brigade halted north of El Hudiera at 11.50 a.m., where horses were watered and fed and put under cover in some willow groves. Many huts and bivouacs were standing here, and a large S.A.A. dump was found. Everything spoke of a hurried flight, as papers and clothes were strewn about in confusion. During the afternoon a shell was fired from the road west of the bivouac, but this failed to do any damage and the gun was quickly put out of action by the outpost regiment.

Many of the horses were now showing signs of fatigue, and five died, while 17 others were evacuated and afterwards had to be destroyed.

The regiment paraded at 6 p.m. in rear of the 18th Bengal Lancers for the next stage of the advance, to Nazareth, some 40 miles distant, via Zerg Heniyeh, Dufeis, Jarak, and Junjar. This was perhaps the most trying march the regiment had ever been called upon to do. The going after the first few miles became very difficult, over rough and rocky country. Often the whole brigade was in single file. Men and horses stumbled along over the rough shale rock surface, where it was difficult for either to keep their feet. Officers and N.C.O.'s were kept busy trying to keep the column closed up, and this became increasingly difficult as the night advanced, for the pace set in front was much too fast, and no time was allowed after clearing a difficult track for the rear files to close up. This resulted in the column getting badly stretched out, and many times touch was nearly lost.

The Indian regiment in front of the R.G.H. were having difficulties with their pack animals, which were inclined to drop behind. This almost ended in disaster, as at about 11 p.m. these men halted, and upon Major Howard going forward to ascertain the reason it was found that

they had lost touch with their column and were hopelessly lost. They could not say which way the column had gone. Patrols were at once organised and sent out in different directions, and after over half an hour's delay Sergt.-Major Garrett returned, having found the rest of the brigade.

An officer's diary gives a vivid impression of this incident (which occurred on the threshold of the Valley of Armageddon) :

I discovered to my horror that the Indians in front of me, whom I was following, had lost touch with the main body at the critical moment when the mountain track divided into four well-worn paths across the vale in four different directions. This was a terrible affair, and I pictured myself lost at the head of the regiment, and I saw Gen. Kelly with the 18th Bengal Lancers in their glory advancing on Nazareth. I was furious with the Indians in front of me, and I cursed them up hill and down dale. That being of no avail I settled down, halted, and dismounted. There were a lot of Bedouins' shacks about, but having no interpreter it was useless to ask them, and probably impossible to drag them out of their shacks. One path led eastwards, which appeared to be the wrong way, as I knew one objective was to blow up the railway which runs to Haifa and that could only go east and west along the valley somewhere. I sent a scout up the path, but he returned saying he heard and saw nothing. Another scout reported the same of a path leading eastwards, I had meanwhile made up my mind that one of the two paths leading across the valley must be right. A scout up one of these solved the situation by picking up a packman who had fallen out from the troop ahead. We went along, soon came up with Major Mills, the 2nd in Command of the Lancers, whom I was delighted to meet—until he told me that he had also lost the Brigadier and staff, who had gone on in front. Another halt and more scouts sent out, and after half an hour we found the Brigadier near the railway, much to everyone's relief. Being late, we hurried on, leaving the R.E. officer with a specially trained demolition officer to blow up the line, which he did.

The noise of the explosions evidently awakened an enemy battery, as several shells were at once put over, but most of them were duds. On reaching the village of Mejeidil, the R.G.H. became advance guard to the

brigade, owing to the 18th Bengal Lancers being left behind to occupy the village and deal with prisoners.

The brigade proceeded, and the R.G.H., moving at a sharp trot, pushed on towards Nazareth, all telegraph wires being cut this side of the town. At 4.25 a.m. the column came in sight of Nazareth and attack orders were issued to squadron leaders. 2nd Lieuts. Pretty and Cornwall with one troop each were sent forward to seize tactical points, with a sub-section of machine guns attached to them. 2nd Lieut. Greene and troop were detailed to round up a large convoy of motor-lorries which were moving from the town.

The regiment drew swords and galloped towards Nazareth. Just on the threshold of the town a machine gun position was noticed on the right. It was rushed at the gallop and its crew of nine taken prisoners.

Nazareth, the home of Jesus' parents, was now defenceless before us—a little town nestling in a hollow and surrounded on all sides by rocky hills. Swords drawn, horses galloping, the R.G.H. poured into its streets, which were just filled with the early morning bustle of an awakening camp. The enemy were completely taken by surprise, the soldiers, both Germans and Turks, mostly unarmed. Hundreds of them surrendered before they had "got the sleep out of their eyes." German G.H.Q. thus was captured by a single regiment of the British force (only the brigade H.Q. was with the R.G.H. for this capture).

Lieut. Inglis was sent with his troop to capture Gen. Liman von Sanders, but he entered several houses without finding him, being told in all instances that the General had left the previous night! According to an Australian account Gen. Liman von Sanders was actually in the town in hiding; but, whether the fox had broken away or had merely gone to earth, he was not bagged. But the important documents of the enemy G.H.Q. were captured.

The bewildered enemy after a while rallied a little, and

heavy street fighting ensued. Our men showed great dash and courage, and within an hour of entering the town had captured and disarmed over 1,500 prisoners, mostly Germans, some of them of high rank.

At about 8 o'clock the enemy troops on the high ground west of the town were organised by the German officers and made a determined counter-attack. The R.G.H. squadrons were redistributed to deal with this. "D" Squadron and part of "B" pushed forward and inflicted severe losses on the enemy, while our H.G.'s and M.G.'s enfiladed the enemy advance, which broke down with great loss. Lieut. R. U. White with one troop were detailed to work round the right flank of the enemy, who were established on a ridge which commanded the main road into Nazareth. This troop pushed the attack well home, killing 12 and wounding 15 of the enemy, the remainder surrendering. Lieut. Pretty was shot at point-blank range and severely wounded through the knee early in the fight.

At 8.30 a.m. an enemy aeroplane made a reconnaissance of the town and attacked our led horses, flying low with machine guns, inflicting a few trivial wounds. At 10 o'clock a very heavy machine gun fire was opened up from some high ground, which we had been unable to make good, and the regiment was ordered to fall back into the brigade reserve position on the Nazareth—Jaffa road. The 9th Hodson's Horse and 18th Bengal Lancers, which had now come up, covered the withdrawal, which was carried out in good order and completed by 11.30 a.m. Our casualties in the capture of Nazareth were 2 O.R.'s killed, 1 officer and 10 O.R.'s wounded, 6 O.R.'s missing, and 28 horses killed.

The regiment was now ordered to take up a line of outposts on high ground from the El Afule—Nazareth road to the north of Junjar. The posts were occupied by 12.30 and signal communication established with them. Much looting by the Arabs was going on of stores and equipment, but it was impossible to stop this owing

to the large number of the Arabs and our shortage of spare men. At 6 o'clock orders were received to withdraw from the outpost line to El Afule, which was reached at 8.30. Men and horses were completely done up, and after putting down the lines all were soon asleep.

Many of the German prisoners taken at Nazareth upon being interrogated expressed great surprise at the rapidity of the advance, and a Staff Major flatly refused to believe that the regiment had come all the way by land, and held that they must have been landed by ship at Haifa.

The next day, September 21, it was decided to reoccupy Nazareth, a decision which was very welcome to the R.G.H., who had not understood why the previous withdrawal was ordered, as they were confident of holding the town. The R.G.H. were again given the vanguard of the brigade. The town was reoccupied without very serious opposition.

An officer's diary of the events of these two days :

It was while we were waiting for the 18th Bengal Lancers and 9th Hodson's Horse to come and go round the flank of the enemy, when, no doubt, we should have collared the lot, that the Brigadier received a message from the division to retire and meet at El Afule, as he had a large outpost line to take up. This was a great pity, firstly because we were so far committed that it was no easy job to get out, and secondly because no doubt during the day we should have consolidated the place, and the evacuation of it made a bad impression. However, I suppose the divisional General had good reasons for it, though as it turned out it was not a bit necessary. Just previous to this order a Taube came over and gave us trouble with its machine gun, flying very low and letting off a lot of shots.

There was only one road to go out by, 800 yds. of which was under very heavy machine gun fire. After giving instructions I went back to find a position for the regiment to take up. A good gallop and no stopping was the only thing. The bullets were all splashing just short of me as I went up the road, but did not seem to hit anyone fortunately. On turning the corner I found that the C.O. had already got back, and he showed me where we were wanted. The 18th Bengal Lancers had already taken up a position on the left, and although the Turks made an

immediate counter-attack it was never pressed very seriously. We had about 12 casualties coming out. I stayed on the road and collected each squadron as they came up.

Meanwhile another position was being worked out as rear-guard to the road to El Afule, down which we hoped to go later on. The counter-attack having been stopped the work of re-organisation began. All units were very much scattered, and many men could not find their horses. I lost one Hotchkiss pack, which I believe was killed. Eventually we got pretty well together, and I went round the new line which our regiment was to hold till dusk, while the rest of the brigade went back to join the division at El Afule.

The line was a strong one, consisting of good positions on very high hills with our horses now in a ravine. We were very tired, and the walking up to these hills was very wearying, as we couldn't ride, it being too rocky. We held on till dusk and then retired slowly, my squadron being the last to go with the machine gun squadron. My orderly produced two bottles of brandy (most excellent) which he had got from somewhere. The way back was down one of the most rugged ravines I have ever seen, and it was a marvel how the horses picked their way. We lost none, but the M.G.'s lost two. After a weary effort we got to the Plain of Esdraelon below. A friendly native showing me the way on, we set off in the moonlight. Passing through the outpost line we got to camp at 8 p.m., and then had to go back a mile and a half to water from a muddy pool. A few horses had watered at Nazareth, but most had not drunk since 3 p.m. the day before. We got to rest at 10 p.m., very exhausted, and were told that there were no orders for morning at present. A great deal of stuff had been captured at El Afule and we were fitted out with what Turkish ponies we wanted. No sleep for 42 hours, so slept well.

Saturday, September 21.—Meanwhile the 4th Division had come through the Musmus pass and the Australian Division had taken many prisoners at Jenin. The next objective was Haifa and Acre for the 5th Division, Beisan for the 4th Division. During the temporary evacuation of Nazareth the Boche went off with as much as he could take, which was very little, and then the Arabs looted every house which was unoccupied.

Reveill  at 5 a.m. We drew rations and forage at 10.30, and after watering moved off to reoccupy Nazareth. The track was fair but fearfully steep, and a very tiring climb, most of us being dead beat on arrival. The Boches had evacuated, and outposts were placed all round facing Haifa, Acre, and Tiberias roads, all regiments being required for the job.

After arrival at Nazareth 2nd Lieut. Greene and one troop were despatched along the Nazareth-Tiberias road to one mile north of Kefr Kenna, reconnoitring Cairn and El Meshed *en route*. Owing to signal communication failing he was out all night. This patrol was well received at Kefr Kenna and the keys of the church, which was being used as a grain store, were handed over to the officer in charge. The German doctor in charge of the hospital in the Latin Convent was very courteous, and did all in his power to make things comfortable for the officers and men.

At about 9 p.m. information was received that an enemy attack was expected from the direction of Haifa and "B" Squadron was detailed to proceed to Brigade H.Q. to mount guard over them. At midnight the enemy attack developed on the left of our line, and lasted until 3 o'clock. The 18th Bengal Lancers who were holding the left sector made a splendid bayonet charge, in which about 180 Turks were killed and 300 captured. The remainder of the enemy column, which was estimated at about 700 in strength, broke and fled in disorder. Many of them gave themselves up the same day to our troops (Lieut. Greene, who was at Kefr Kenna, accounted for some 30 of this party).

"D" Squadron, who were holding the extreme right of the line, had an amusing experience during the attack on the left sector. The sentries noticed something moving about in front of the line and challenged. No answer being forthcoming fire was opened up, and it was found that the "enemy" was a large performing bear. It took 18 direct hits to finish him off.

The attack was made by the Turks with a considerable number of machine guns. The 18th Bengal Lancers allowed the Turks to come quite close up to their trenches and then jumped out on foot and attacked them with the bayonet. After a short but hotly contested fight the Turks turned and ran, leaving 30 killed, 300 prisoners, and most of their machine-guns in our hands.

This creditable little action ended all opposition at Nazareth, though scattered prisoners were from time to time collected by the outposts. A considerable amount of loot was also picked up, arms, horse equipment, and boots being the chief part of it. The boots were regarded as very useful finds until they were found to be made chiefly of paper. The inhabitants were very friendly, and unfeignedly glad to be quit of the Germans, bringing in plenty of fowls, eggs, and other provisions. Strange to say, most of them, even the children, spoke French and English.

At 10.30 a.m. on September 22 orders were received by R.G.H. to relieve the 9th Hodson's Horse on the south-west and south of Nazareth. This relief was completed by 12 o'clock. Troops were detailed to destroy carcases of horses and bury the dead around Nazareth. The body of Sergt. Thompson, of "A" Squadron, killed on the 20th, was recovered, and given burial at a spot 1,000 yds. on a slope west of the town near some trees.

To see now how the rest of the cavalry had fared. General Allenby's despatch records :

By noon the leading troops of the Desert Mounted Corps had reached Jelameh, Tell-ed-Drurh, and Hudeira, 18 miles north of the original front line. After a brief rest the advance was continued. The 5th Cavalry Division moved north to Ez Zerg-haniyeh. It then turned north-east, and, riding through the hills of Samaria past Jarak, descended into the Plain of Esdraelon at Abu Shusheh. The 13th Cavalry Brigade was then directed on Nazareth, the 14th on El Afule.

The 4th Cavalry Division turned north-east at Kh. es Sumrah, and followed the valley of the Wadi Arah into the hills. The valley gradually narrows as the pass at Musmus is reached. The enemy had sent a battalion from El Afule to hold this pass, but only its advanced guard arrived in time. Overcoming its resistance, the cavalry encountered the remainder of the battalion at El Lejjun. The 2nd Lancers charged, killed 46 with the lance, and captured the remainder, some 470 in number. The 4th Cavalry Division then marched to El Afule, which it reached at 8 a.m., half an hour after its capture by the 14th Cavalry Brigade.

In the meantime the 13th Cavalry Brigade of the 5th Cavalry

Division, riding across the Plain of Esdraelon, had reached Nazareth, the site of the Yilderim general headquarters, at 5.30 a.m. Fighting took place in the streets, some 2,000 prisoners being captured. Liman von Sanders had already made good his escape, but his papers and some of his staff were taken. This brigade then marched to El Afule, arriving there as the 4th Cavalry Division rode down the Plain of Jezreel to Beisan, which it reached at 4.30 p.m., having covered some 80 miles in 34 hours. The 4th Cavalry Division detached a regiment to seize the railway bridge over the Jordan at Jisr Mejamie.

The Australian Mounted Division, which had followed the 4th Cavalry Division into the Plain of Esdraelon, was directed on Jenin, where the road from Messudie to El Afule leaves the hills. Jenin was reached at 5.30 p.m. and was captured after a sharp fight, a large number of prisoners being taken.

Thus, within 36 hours of the commencement of the battle, all the main outlets of escape remaining to the Turkish VIIth and VIIIth Armies had been closed. They could only avoid capture by using the tracks which run south-east from the vicinity of Nablus to the crossings over the Jordan at Jisr-el-Damieh. These were being rapidly denied to them.

The first phase of the operations was over.

CHAPTER XXIV

ACRE : DAMASCUS

THE Turkish forces west of the Jordan (the VIIth and VIIIth Armies) were in effect destroyed by the night of September 20, and what remained to be done now as regards them was a gigantic "mopping up" operation. But the Turkish forces east of the Jordan (the IVth Army) were still in being, and they were now attacked vigorously. On September 24 Es Salt was occupied and on September 25 Amman, with large captures of men and material. The remnants of this IVth Turkish Army then retired on Damascus along the railway, via Deraa, and were met later there by our forces.

On September 22 the 5th Cavalry Division was assembled at Nazareth with a view to a march on Acre and Haifa, which were still in the possession of the Turks. The R.G.H. paraded at 4 a.m. September 23 for the march out from Nazareth. *En route* large numbers of dead Turk ponies and much discarded ammunition were encountered. At 9 a.m. a short halt was made at Shefr Amr and horses were watered and fed. The population turned out and gave the troops a great reception. An English missionary who had been there for four years expressed the great delight of the Palestinians at being delivered out of the hands of the Turks.

The C.O. went forward with the brigade staff to make a personal reconnaissance, and Major Howard, M.C., took charge of the regiment. The towns of Haifa and Acre came into view on clearing the village and the regiment embouched upon a large flat plain in column of line of troop column. Haifa was at this time being attacked by the

14th and 15th Brigades, and a good deal of artillery fire was heard. Some H.E. shells were fired at our brigade from Haifa, but all fell short. A light battery of Krupp guns at Acre also opened fire, but no damage was done, and these guns were shortly afterwards captured by the advance guard. The brigade marched north of Acre and swung round and closed upon the northern side of the town. All enemy opposition had been dealt with by the advance regiment, and orders were received to put down lines half a mile north of the town near a large mound. "B" Squadron was detailed to take up an outpost line, which was occupied by about 4.30 p.m. 2nd. Lieut. Gaydon and 10 men were sent into Acre for police duty.

Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., rejoined the regiment here, having been in charge of the Liaison Group, 4th and 5th Cavalry Divisions, from the commencement of the operations.

R.G.H. casualties from September 19 to 23rd inclusive were 2 O.R.'s killed, 1 officer and 10 O.R.'s wounded, 18 O.R.'s to Field Ambulance, 72 horses killed, destroyed, and evacuated.

Men and horses were able to get a good swim on the beach, which was greatly appreciated. During the morning an aeroplane dropped a message stating that Es Salt had fallen. This was pleasant reading, as the regiment had been associated with this place during the unsuccessful attack earlier in the year.

The next day several officers and men visited the town, the population of which was very glad to see the British troops. Acre has associations with many of the great campaigns of the world's history, and this capture of it by the 13th Division was the 13th time it had been taken and the second time it had been taken by a force under English command. It was captured in 1104 by the First Crusaders, and recaptured by the Saracens 1187. In 1191 Richard Cœur de Lion took the city again. After many other sieges it resisted the great Napoleon in 1799,

the heroic defence being led by an English general, Sir Sidney Smith.

An officer's diary on the events of these days :

September 23.—Reveill  at 2.30 a.m. Dress, cook, and eat breakfast in the dark. Everybody being hidden under a separate fig tree, it was difficult to get collected. However, we got off somehow to the starting-point, which we passed in good time. The 18th Bengal Lancers were doing advance guard to-day. The road is a good one, strewn here and there with overturned Turkish waggons. We follow the valley of the Brook Kishon, and the country on either side is covered with scrub. For the first time I saw pomegranate groves growing on each side of the stream. By 10 o'clock we reach a large village, called Seframa. It is full of agriculturists busy harvesting. There are large olive groves all round it, and in front we see the huge, flat, circular Plain of Acre, with the town on a little promontory on the bay. We feed horses and have lunch. Numerous gardens provide onions and tomatoes and the inhabitants performed with songs and dances for our amusement. There were some very pretty ladies there, also a tame bear on a chain. I met an English church missionary, who wanted to know if it was safe to walk to Nazareth, where he had left his wife and family. After half an hour we went on again. Acre is surrounded by tall palm trees. Close to it is a mound, which obviously the enemy would hold, as it was the only tactical position anywhere near. On the other hand, we had a huge flat plain to move over in order to approach the town. The Brigadier did the obvious thing, which was to make a large detour round the east and north side of the town. While doing this they fired a few shells at us, but the armoured cars got up to the town and reported no resistance. The 18th Bengal Lancers then galloped the mound and captured two field guns which had been left there. We also captured 150 men.

On arrival we were given a site near the mound to camp on, and we formed an outpost line to the north of the city. We later took our horses to the seashore to water in the River Namein and all had a bathe, one of the most enjoyable we had ever had—a beautiful shore, and fresh water as well. We all got clean and fresh again. "B" Squadron had to do outpost that night. We got our bivouacs up for the first time and had a real good rest, as we did not expect to go farther.

The town is probably just the same as it was 1,000 years ago and the 13 sieges it has had have not altered it much. The streets are narrow and walls high. The sea runs right up to the walls. Outside are large gardens rich with pomegranates, lemons, figs,



R.G.H., SYRIA, WATERING HORSES

dates, and everything that is good to eat in hot weather. The railway from Haifa is taken up. The Turks had made dummy guns of two wheels connected by a stick, and an iron pipe to represent the gun. These they had put up in a row along the seashore.

The Plain of Acre is most fertile deep soil, growing chiefly millet and maize. There are herds of very fine cattle and sheep ; a few small sailing boats in the bay, but nothing big on account of mines. Meanwhile the 14th and 15th Brigades pushing on to Haifa, captured guns and 500 prisoners after a stiff and hard fight which ended in two successful charges. A few prisoners escaped and ran into our outposts the next morning. We managed to get some good fruit, chiefly pomegranates, which were delicious.

On September 25 Capt. Lord Apsley and one troop made a reconnaissance of the coast road towards Beirut and found four destroyed motor-lorries and one horse waggon. The road was impassable for wheeled traffic, after going eight miles, for a distance of six miles. During the afternoon the regiment shifted camp to the beach south of the town, and horses and men enjoyed an excellent bathe in calm shallow water. Regimental H.Q. were fixed up in a disused railway station and things were made fairly comfortable for everybody.

At 6 p.m. orders were received to march on the morrow on the road to Damascus, less one squadron, which had to garrison the town until the infantry arrived. " A " Squadron was detailed for this duty. On September 26 the regiment paraded (less " A " Squadron) at 4 a.m. and joined the brigade group at 5 a.m. south of the mound for the march to Kefr Kenna, about 20 miles distant. The regiment halted at Shefr Amr to water and feed horses, and the men had breakfast ; moved off again at 9.30, and, after passing through the village, branched off from the main road on to a track crossing the hills in an easterly direction. The going was bad and the column was in single file most of the way. At a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Kefr Kenna at 2.30 p.m. the regiment camped for the night. Watering here was very difficult, water

being only obtainable in buckets from wells three miles distant. Some hours were taken in giving the horses a drink.

On September 27 the regiment paraded ready to move off at 2 a.m. and took its place in the column at 2.40 a.m. There was a long and tedious delay in getting started, as the whole division was on the road in column of half sections, and a great deal of transport was moving at the same time. A halt was made at Lubin for about 20 minutes, after which the advance proceeded towards Tiberias, which was reached at 8.30 a.m.: thirteen miles had been covered from the starting-point.

The view of the Sea of Galilee from the high ground was splendid. Upon arrival on its shores the men had a swim, after having put down the lines and watered and fed the horses. The Australian Division was also encamped in this area, having taken Tiberias the day before.

At 1 o'clock the brigade continued the advance towards the crossing over the Jordan at Kusatra, along the Tiberias—Damascus road. The country was very hilly and going was bad, some eight or nine miles of the journey being done on foot with the horses led. Many dead Turks were passed by the roadside, and numerous dead horses. The brigade halted $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-north-east of Kusatra and lines were put down for the night. Several horses had dropped out with fatigue, and five were shot on the track. Many of the other horses were badly exhausted, and some died on the lines during the night.

Meanwhile the Australian Mounted Division had advanced to the same assembly point from Medjel, on the Sea of Galilee. The programme arranged was for them to be in advance of the 5th Cavalry Division, which was to follow in their track towards Damascus, but at the Jordan crossing south of Lake Hule the retreating Turks had made a show of resistance. They had blown up the Jisr Benat Yakub Bridge (the Bridge of Jacob's Daughters), which spans the Jordan about 2,000 yards

from the place where the river flows out of Lake Hule. The enemy also hurried from Damascus nearly 1,000 Germans and Turks in motor-lorries, and some field guns to hold the crossing. These men were posted in a mass of lava boulders. A frontal attack seemed hopeless, so the 3rd Light Horse Brigade tried for a crossing at the southern end of Lake Hule, and the 5th Light Horse Brigade, save one regiment detached to hold the front, for a crossing at El Min, nearly two miles south of the damaged Bridge of Jacob. The 5th Brigade swam their horses across very quickly, and the enemy, taken by surprise on their left flank, abandoned their positions and fled towards Damascus. Unfortunately the cavalry were in extremely bad country for horses, and effective pursuit was not easy. The 3rd Light Horse Brigade then crossed the river after dark and pursued the enemy as far as Deir-es-Saras, where 50 men who could not get into lorries to return to Damascus were captured, with three field guns and some machine guns.

That was the position when the R.G.H. arrived on September 28 and set to work to assist the sappers in repairing the bridge and making roads. The horses were taken across the Jordan at a ford south of the Jisr Benat Yakub. There was a large crop of daru growing close to the river, and the horses were turned into this for a good feed. Had it not been for this grazing and the good water available there is no doubt that a further 50 per cent. of the horses would have dropped out on the next march. The bridge over the Jordan, which had been blown up by the Turks in their retreat, was made good, and by noon wheeled traffic was passing over. Enemy planes bombed the bridge on three occasions during the day, but no damage was done. A dismounted party of 100 men was detailed from the regiment to make up a road from the ford across some swampy ground, as all cavalry were to utilise this while the wheeled transport proceeded over the bridge. By 1 o'clock a great number of waggons and practically the whole 5th Division were concentrated

near the bridge and ford ready to cross, and at 3 o'clock orders were received for the advance to continue.

At 5 p.m. the brigade moved off for the march to El Kunitra, the R.G.H. being the leading regiment. There were many signs of recent fighting along the whole route, the Australian Division being 10 hours ahead of us. Numerous machine guns, with their crews dead beside them, pointed to a stiffening of the enemy resistance. Several field and camel guns, with large quantities of ammunition, were seen abandoned by the roadside. Troops were obliged to proceed by the road, as this part of the country for many miles was rock-and-boulder-strewn. Batches of prisoners and wounded, as well as burial parties left by the Australian Division, were frequently met by the roadside. The advance continued and the regiment arrived at El Kunitra at about 11 o'clock p.m. Lines were put down on the east side of the road on a large plain. Here was bivouacked the whole division. The night was very cold, a high north-west wind blowing. Our force had risen in 12 miles to a height of 4,000 ft. above sea level. The village of El Kunitra was practically deserted, the inhabitants having fled to the hills on the approach of the retreating Turks. A large quantity of hay was requisitioned from the village, and all horses were able to get a good quantity of fodder.

The regiment paraded again at 6.15 p.m. and moved off as leading regiment to the 13th Brigade for the march on Damascus. After going about 12 miles the column was held up owing to the Australian Division still being in action with the enemy. Machine gun and rifle fire continued until 2 o'clock a.m. of the 30th, and the regiment was compelled to remain halted on the roadside from 9.30 p.m. September 29 until 3 a.m. September 30, when orders were received to continue the advance.

An officer's diary on the events of these days :

Friday, September 27.—We move off (5th Cavalry Division) at 2.40 a.m. for Tiberias. The road is good, and as soon as day breaks one wakes up and feels quite fresh again.

At 9 a.m. we arrive at Tiberias, a squat, thickly-housed town on the very edge of the Sea of Galilee, the road leading to it going down a steep hill. The last of the Australians were just leaving as we arrived, and as they were held up at the Jordan crossing we were given two hours to off-saddle, water, and feed. This we did on the edge of the lake, and of course we all bathed. It is a delightful sea with a very stony bottom. We had a good meal and plenty of tea. The lake is in a deep basin, hot and sultry, with the Jordan running into it at the top and out again at the bottom.

At 1 p.m. we move around the edge of the lake by Capernaum, of which there are very few signs left. The road seemed unending, but after a long, stiff climb we finally reached a spot near Kasra Atra in the dark, where we lay down just as we were. The country was getting very hilly. Here and there were German colonies and a few trees.

Saturday, September 28.—Reveill  at 4 a.m. and we move off at 9 a.m. for El Kunitra. On arrival at the Jordan crossing we have to set to work to make a road near a ford to get our guns over. This we do with brushwood and stones, and after two hours' hard work it is ready. We then get two more hours' rest, so off-saddle, graze our horses on the banks of the Jordan, and of course bathe again. The river here is not muddy and only about 30 yds. broad. I had a real good soap all over, and also washed some of my clothes (they sadly needed it).

Before moving off we left all horses considered unfit to go on under Capt. Gilholme, officer commanding divisional horses (much to his disgust). At 5.30 a.m. we set out along a road with very rocky country on each side and eventually arrived at El Kunitra at 11 p.m., where we camped for the night. Found lots of hay in the village, which we borrowed, as the inhabitants were very hostile Circassians.

Sunday, September 29.—Reveill  5 a.m. We had all day to rest and did not move until 6.30 p.m. The country round is rocky, with a good deal of short graze. It lies below Mount Hebron, and is cold and desolate. We got plenty of water for horses and men. At 2 p.m. there was a most distinct earthquake, which many of us felt. We are now 3,000 ft. up and the nights are very cold. We only have our drill jackets and no coats, but use horse blankets by night as well as our own.

At 6.30 p.m. we move again, but do not get very far as the Australian Division is held up at Sasa and take a long time to get on. We are kept waiting on the road, shivering with cold, for 4½ hours. No orders came down, and we had to be ready to move at any moment. It was the coldest night we have yet

experienced. Many slept on the road. Others walked up and down to keep warm. I did the latter, as it was too cold to sleep. It was a really miserable night, but finally we moved on at 4.30 a.m. on Monday, September 30.

On September 30 the regiment halted to water horses at 6.30 a.m. at a roadside stream, but the horses would not drink owing to the cold. A large number of prisoners, including several Germans and Austrians, passed here on their way back to the rear. The brigade halted at Sasa, and all non-fighting packs were brigaded under Sergt. Orchard, with orders to follow on in the rear of the brigade. The village showed signs of a recent action, there being many dead and wounded Turks waiting for the ambulances. About a mile further north the regiment met a further large batch of prisoners, mostly Germans, also three field guns which had been taken earlier in the day. Machine guns were strewn about, and equipment, which had evidently been dropped to lighten the loads of the retreating enemy.

At 11 o'clock a.m. the regiment reached Khan Esh Shiha and halted in a large hollow, where horses were watered and fed and the men made a hurried meal. Information was received that a large force of the enemy was moving in our direction, and orders were issued to prepare for a charge. Officers and men were eager for this opportunity to develop, but unfortunately it did not.

At 1 o'clock p.m. orders were received for the regiment to move off at once as leading regiment to the brigade for the march to Kaukab (the reputed site of the conversion of St. Paul). "D" Squadron was advance guard, and the whole brigade proceeded at the trot over a stony plain in line of column of squadron column. When about four miles from Kaukab the Divisional Commander stopped the brigade and issued fresh orders, as Kaukab had then been occupied by our troops.

Capt. Lord Apsley was now despatched with a strong troop to locate and, if possible, capture the large enemy wireless station near Meidan. On arriving at Kaukab

ridge the wireless pole was sighted and large columns of smoke were seen to rise near it. About 3 p.m. the pole was seen to fall. The patrol pushed on to see to what extent the station had been damaged, and whether it was possible to save any portion. On reaching the village of Darya scattered parties of the enemy were met and dealt with. On reaching an open space 2,000 yds. south of Kadem station a party of Turks were seen marching towards the wireless station. Lest these should give information of the patrol they were immediately charged and captured. The patrol then entered wooded country west of the station, and several large parties of Turks were passed unobserved. The buildings in the station could now be seen burning furiously. Natives informed the patrol leader that the place was being destroyed by a party of Turks and Germans, and on moving to a point about 300 yds. north-west of the wireless station some 500 men could be seen engaged in the work of destruction. A party of five Germans was surprised and captured by Corpl. Tuffnell and his advanced patrol, and they reported that the wireless plant had been destroyed. The patrol then formed up and charged the enemy, who were in the road by the railway station, to enable the officer in command of the patrol to see that nothing remained of the station but débris. The enemy, taken by surprise, offered no resistance, and some 150 to 200 were captured and driven down the road. After going a short distance they refused to accompany the patrol. By this time many more had joined them. General fire was opened up from all directions, and the patrol, who were outnumbered by about 12 to 1, were ordered to charge. Three Germans and 12 Turks were killed with the sword and many more wounded, while the Hotchkiss gun inflicted further loss on the enemy. One N.C.O. and two horses were wounded from the patrol. At 5.15 p.m. the patrol proceeded towards El Muad Hamiya and eventually remained with the Australian Division.

Mr. W. T. Massey records of this exploit :

An admirable effort was made to secure the German wireless installation. It was a high-powered plant, and by its means the Germans were in constant communication with Constantinople and Berlin. A great deal of German propaganda in the East has passed through this station, and we should have liked to capture it intact. Capt. Lord Apsley was sent on a special mission to secure it. He took with him two troops of the Royal Gloucester Hussars Yeomanry, and, leaving after the 14th Cavalry Brigade started for the Kiswe road, they arrived at Kadem station at 4.30. The wireless station was close by, but the German operators had taken no risks. They had prepared the whole equipment for demolition, and on the Gloucesters' approach the great standards were blown up, and a party of Germans and Turks were seen completing the destruction. The Gloucesters charged this party in the hope of saving some of the apparatus, and three Germans and seven Turks were killed with the sword. The remainder surrendered, but before they could be marched away they were reinforced by a considerable number of Germans, and the two troops had to withdraw by a different route from that which they had taken to enter the military area of Damascus. They joined the Australian Mounted Division in the evening. If the two troops had been two divisions they could not have prevented the wreckage of the whole plant, and the Gloucesters' fine action deserved better luck.

In the meantime the regiment proceeded with the brigade in the direction of Kiswe, as our Intelligence had received word that large numbers of disorganised Turks were coming in towards Damascus. The brigade made a wide detour, but no enemy were met with in any number. Many miles were covered, and horses and men were nearly done up, as they had been on the move for 30 hours without any opportunity of getting a proper meal. At 7 p.m., when the men were just getting into the bivouac area, orders were received to take up an outpost line on the west side of the main road overlooking corps H.Q. No lights or fires were allowed (although the corps camp was brilliantly illuminated with electric light and numerous fires were burning). The men were therefore obliged to make another frugal meal of water and bully

beef. The night passed quietly, but many large fires were seen in, and explosions heard from, Damascus.

The general position should now be explained. The Desert Mounted Corps had advanced on Damascus in two columns—one column, the 4th Cavalry Division, by the south end of the Sea of Galilee, via Irbid and Deraa, the other, the 5th Cavalry Division and Australian Mounted Division, round the north end of the sea, via El Kunitra.

The progress of this second column we have seen. As to the first column, the route followed by it across the Jordan plateau had proved difficult, and considerable opposition had been encountered at Irbid, and again at El Remte. There, after driving the enemy northwards towards Mezerib, this column gained touch with the Arab army on September 28.

After its raids on the enemy's railways round Deraa between September 16 and 18 the Arab army had moved into the Hauran. It issued thence to attack the IVth Turkish Army as the latter passed Mafrak in its retreat northwards, forcing the Turks to abandon guns and transport. Moving rapidly northwards, the Arabs then captured the stations of Ezra and Ghazale, between Damascus and Deraa. On September 27 they entrenched themselves at Sheik Saad, 17 miles north of Deraa, across the Turkish line of retreat. Sharp fighting took place all day, in which heavy casualties were inflicted on the retreating Turks and Germans and in which numerous prisoners were taken. After breaking up the retreating columns of the IVth Army the Arabs captured Deraa, and on September 28 joined hands, as we have noted, with the 4th Cavalry Division near El Remte.

This column then advanced northwards through Mezerib and along the old French railway, with the Arabs on its right flank, collecting stragglers and pressing on the heels of the remnants of the IVth Turkish Army.

To return to the first column, shortly after midday on September 30 the Australian Mounted Division overcame

the enemy's resistance at Katana. By the evening it had closed the exits from Damascus to the north and north-west, while the 5th Cavalry Division had reached the southern outskirts of the town.

Thus at the end of September Damascus was under our hands. Next morning it was occupied by the Desert Mounted Corps and the Arab army, but, after the enemy prisoners had been collected, our troops were withdrawn for political reasons and the Arabs left in charge.

Damascus at one period of history under the Arabian Empire, was the chief centre of the world's culture. It is probably familiar to all the civilised world through the tales of the *Arabian Nights*, which generally have their scenes in its streets and palaces ; and it has given two words of magnificence to the language, "Damascus" brocade and "damascene" swords, and one other household word, the "damson" plum, which was first grown in the gardens of that city. Damascus is mentioned in Genesis in connection with Abraham, and was conquered by David during the brief spell of greatness of the Jewish nation. Later it passed into the hands of the Assyrians, then of the Persians, and then of the descendants of Alexander the Great. It was captured by Cæsar's great rival, Pompey, about a century before the Christian era, but was not incorporated with the Roman Empire until Trajan's day, 105 A.D. St. Paul conducted a great mission there, and it became largely a Christian city until conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century. It was the first capital of their Empire, and was famous all over the world for the magnificent court of Haroun el Raschid. In the twelfth century it was besieged without success by the Crusaders and in the fifteenth century was sacked by Tamerlane. Since the sixteenth century it has been in the possession of the Ottoman Turks. Its most famous building is the Ommiade Mosque, which was built in the first instance as a heathen temple, was later a Roman temple, then a Christian church, and later a mosque.

Gen. Allenby's despatches comment on the capture of Damascus :

The advance to Damascus, following on the operations in the Plain of Esdraelon and the Valley of Jezreel, had thrown a considerable strain on the Desert Mounted Corps. Great results were, however, achieved.

On September 26, when the advance began, some 45,000 Turks and Germans were still in Damascus or were retreating on it. It is true that all units were in a state of disorganisation, but given time, the enemy could have formed a force capable of delaying my advance.

The destruction of the remnants of the IVth Army and the capture of an additional 20,000 prisoners prevented any possibility of this. The remnants of the Turkish armies in Palestine and Syria, numbering some 17,000 men, of whom only 4,000 were effective rifles, fled northwards, a mass of individuals, without organisation, without transport, and without any of the accessories required to enable it to act even on the defensive.

Major Howard's diary (to which this volume owes much, for this officer wrote vividly and clearly) relates :

October 1.—On reaching the main Kiswe—Damascus road we met the Hedjaz troops, or, rather, numerous followers who had joined them. Galloping about wildly shouting, singing, and letting off their rifles in the air, they were a most quaint and picturesque sight—gaudy, brilliant robes, floating about in the wind, old men with long grey beards. They moved about in small parties of six to eight, all bent on loot and destroying Turks and Germans.

Finally the transport halted on a stream about eight miles out of Damascus preparatory to bivouacking for the night. I made them form a square, and had to dispose of my squadron all round them as night outposts. We got some good grazing and some fresh water and had a good meal. At 10 p.m. we received a fresh order to saddle up and march through Damascus to rejoin the division, which (after all day being out of touch) had been discovered camped in the groves near the town. The town stands under a high range of hills running north-east and south-west—really the Lebanon hills. To the east, north, and south, is a huge fertile plain, many rivers, gardens, and trees growing round the town, which obscured all troops and made it difficult to locate anybody. All the inhabitants had rifles, and were firing them off continuously all night, which made one think that

there was still a battle going on. We had a long trek right through the town. The dust was awful. Eventually we found the regiment comfortably settled in a large walnut grove at 4.30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 2. It was no good going to sleep, as we were to move again shortly, so we washed and shaved, had breakfast, and got ready to move at 8 a.m. for a triumphant march through Damascus.

At 8 a.m. on October 2 we moved to a rendezvous to take part in this triumphant march. To reach the place we had to go about eight miles through the gardens. The dust was very bad through the town and we could see very little. However, it was interesting, and we had a great welcome from the European and Syrian inhabitants. The prisoners and wounded were all in a very bad condition, and great difficulties were experienced in dealing with them. Eventually we got to our camp area at Ed Judeida at 5 p.m. after marching all day. This was in a forest of orange trees, beautifully shaded and well watered. The camp was rather cramped but very pleasant. Two divisions were there. We settled down for a good rest, not knowing when we should move on again.

From 5.30 September 29 to 8 p.m. October 2, I and the rest of the squadron had only slept nine hours in a total of 110 hours. So you can imagine we needed rest!

Thursday, October 3.—Reveill   at 6 a.m. We spent the day resting, washing, and reorganising, and writing reports. Managed to get a good supply of beautiful grapes, eggs, and vegetables. Several horses had to be evacuated. Also men started to go, mostly with malaria caught in the Valley of Esdraelon or the Plain of Acre. One or two officers came round from the 4th Cavalry to see us, and we related our experiences to each other.

The strength of the regiment on September 30 at Damascus was 17 officers, 283 O.R.'s, and 335 animals. Many men were being evacuated with malaria. The decrease in the strength of the regiment since the commencement of the operations until September 30 inclusive was 2 officers, 41 O.R.'s, and 67 animals.

CHAPTER XXV

ALEPPO : THE ARMISTICE

THE tale of October is of an energetic pursuit of the disorganised enemy as far as Aleppo, when he sued for peace, and an armistice was granted on October 31. It was the good fortune of the 5th Cavalry Division to be entrusted with the chief part in this final phase, and it well earned the praise of Gen. Allenby :

Aleppo is over 300 miles from our former front line. The 5th Cavalry Division covered 500 miles between September 19 and October 26 and captured over 11,000 prisoners and 52 guns. During this period the 5th Cavalry Division lost only 21 per cent. of its horses.

The proud record of the division's work would not be complete without a reference to the casualties to animals. Every cavalryman will appreciate these figures, which show the state of the animals after marching and fighting for 37 days, during which the division averaged almost 100 marching miles per week, and almost continuous pursuit actions. When Gen. Allenby saw these figures he remarked that "the 5th Division were as good horse masters as fighters." Here is the table :

				Riding	Draught	Pack	Total
Killed	..	..	..	152	—	5	157
Died	..	..	..	265	57	5	327
Destroyed	..	..	..	179	44	14	237
Wounded and evacuated				63	—	—	63
Evacuated	..	..	..	735	129	38	902
Missing	..	..	..	169	57	8	234

1,920

Establishment 8971.
 Percentage of wastage 21.41

Truly a great month's work, proving all the qualities of a cavalry force—courage, endurance, and careful horse mastery.

To summarise briefly the general events of October. Having captured Damascus, Gen. Allenby determined to exploit this success and to advance to the line Rayak—Beirut. The occupation of Beirut would give a port, with a road and a railway, leading inland to Rayak and Damascus, and a shorter line of supply would thus be obtained. The Desert Mounted Corps (leaving the Australian Mounted Division at Damascus) therefore moved on Rayak and Zahle on October 5. Both places were occupied on the following day. At Rayak (the junction of the broad gauge railway from the north, and the light lines to Beirut and to Damascus and the Hedjaz) were found the remains of thirty aeroplanes which had been burnt by the enemy before he retired. Large quantities of stores and rolling stock were captured.

The 7th (Meerut) Division had meanwhile marched from Haifa to Beirut along the coast. It was received by the populace of Tyre and Sidon with enthusiasm. On October 8 it reached Beirut and was warmly welcomed, the inhabitants handing over 660 Turks, including 60 officers, who had surrendered to them. Ships of the French Navy had already entered the harbour.

On October 9 the Desert Mounted Corps continued its advance and occupied Homs, leaving one division at Damascus, and the 31st Corps also continued its march along the coast to Tripoli. Armoured cars occupied Baalbek on October 9, taking over 500 Turks, who had surrendered to the inhabitants. The 5th Cavalry Division reached Baalbek on October 11 and Homs on October 15, having marched over 80 miles since leaving Rayak. The station buildings at Homs had been burnt by the enemy before he evacuated the town. On the coast, Tripoli was occupied by the 21st Corps Cavalry Regiment and armoured cars on October 13. The occupation of Tripoli provided a shorter supply route for the cavalry at Homs.

To seize Aleppo was the next step. The 5th Cavalry Division and the Armoured Car Batteries were alone available for this. There were said to be some 20,000 Turks and Germans at Aleppo, but one Cavalry Division was counted sufficient to deal with them! And even that division could not advance as one unit. The divisional General split it up into two columns, "A" and "B," and pushed "A" forward, with "B" following as a reserve. It was a great "bluff," but in the demoralised state of the Turks not imprudent.

On October 25 the Arab army forced a way into Aleppo, and early on the morning of October 26 the armoured cars and the 15th Cavalry Brigade, moving round the west side of the town, followed the enemy along the Aleppo—Katma road and gained touch with him south-east of Haritan. The Turkish rearguard consisted of some 2,500 infantry, 150 cavalry, and 8 guns. The enemy was charged, but our force was not strong enough to complete a victory and was withdrawn till a larger force could be assembled. That night the Turkish rearguard withdrew to a position near Deir-el-Jemel, 20 miles north-west of Aleppo. The 5th Cavalry Division remained in observation astride the roads leading from Aleppo to Killis and Katma, and occupied Muslimie Junction. It was too weak to continue the advance to Alexandretta till the arrival of the Australian Mounted Division, which had already left Damascus to reinforce it, but no further effort was needed. The enemy sued for peace on October 31.

To return to the R.G.H. After a couple of days' most welcome rest in the precincts of Damascus, on October 5 at 6.15 a.m. it paraded as the leading regiment of the 13th Brigade for the march on Khan Meizelun, a distance of 25 miles. Khan Meizelun was reached in the afternoon and lines were put down on the west side of the village. There was made here a curious find. It will be remembered that Capt. Lloyd-Baker was killed in the action at Katia in 1916. His sword was now picked up by one of the

R.G.H. at Khan Meizelun in 1918. It had evidently been taken by a Turkish officer and abandoned here. The next day, October 6, the regiment took the road again on the way to Rayak. The parade strength in marching out was 13 officers, 156 O.R.'s, and 216 animals. There were attached 10 Arabs. Rayak was reached in the afternoon, many dead Turks and horses being passed on the road. Lines were put down near the late enemy aerodrome in which were remnants of the 30 aeroplanes which had been burnt. At this camp "A" Squadron, which had been detached to garrison Acre until the arrival of the infantry there, joined up with the regiment. They had come across country from Acre, living on the country as they marched. During October 7 and 8 the regiment rested at Rayak. The population there, which appeared to be principally Armenian, was very friendly to the British forces. On October 8, during a bombing attack by the enemy, Pte. Kendall, "B" Squadron, signaller, was killed, and one horse killed and two wounded. An enemy aeroplane, flying very high, came over our lines about 7 o'clock in the morning. The order to lie down was at once passed round the regiment, and Pte. Kendall was on his hands and knees within five yards of where the second bomb dropped. He was instantly killed. Fortunately the bombs were of small calibre or the horses would have suffered severely, as the lines were very close together. Whilst in this camp the regiment made a special effort to get its harness and equipment in something like parade order again, and the horses were given good grazing. A very cheerful event was the arrival of a small parcel mail from England.

An officer's diary on the events of these days :

We moved off across a rough, mountainous country till we struck the main road at Rayak. Here were many signs of the retreating Turk. Dead men, horses, and camels everywhere. They had been severely handled by the Australians and by our aeroplanes. Just before our capture of Damascus von Sanders had collected

about 7,000 men, which he put under a Turkish commander to defend Damascus. The Turkish commander dispersed these men in non-tactical positions where they could get no water, and then galloped off himself and surrendered to Gen. Barrow, telling him exactly where his men were.

We moved via Khan Dimez to Khan Meizelun, where we arrived at 2 p.m. It was not a good camping ground, but there was a fair amount of water. During the march from here to Aleppo we fed entirely on the country except for sugar, milk, and bacon, which we got where we could. The method was this: before starting, a party of about six men went in advance with the supply officer, who had to requisition mutton or beef, barley and wood, at or near each camp. The sheep were driven in, killed, and butchered, and, if we had time, we always boiled the mutton overnight and ate it cold the next day, otherwise each man had to fry his own. On arrival in camp 75 per cent. of the men had to go off with sacks and blankets to fetch barley for the horses; others were sent to gather green millet stalks; and others to forage for wood, to obtain which was always the greatest difficulty. We often had to pull down doors and windows of houses to get enough to do our cooking. After a 15- or 18-mile trek the real day's work was only begun, and everybody was busily engaged up to dark. Hardly a horse was ever groomed. Each regiment took it in turn to do advance guard and outposts for the night.

October 6.—Reveill  4.30 a.m. Move off at 6.30, preceded by the 14th Brigade. After a long trek through a waterless country with deep ravines and gorges in any of which we might easily have been held up by a few Turks, we arrive at the beautifully cultivated and rich valley of Nahr Zaarn, between the Lebanon and anti-Lebanon hills. It is about six miles across, all corn in the valley and all vineyards on the hillsides. The red soil intermixed with the green barley and green trees, with here and there a few villages built in sheltered nooks on the east side of the Lebanon, created a beautiful picture which an artist could make the most of. We got good water and proceed on to Rayak, the important railway junction between Aleppo, Beirut, and Damascus. Here the broad gauge from Aleppo shifts into narrow gauge to Damascus and rack railway to Beirut. It was used as a centre by the Turks for repairs and making engines, also a large aviation park. The machinery captured here was worth over a million pounds.

We were overtaken by a thunderstorm and got wet through. On approaching Rayak an immense fusillade was going on, and I thought we were in for another battle, but it turned out to be only the inhabitants, all of whom were armed with Turkish rifles

taken from the retreating Turks, who were showing their joy by letting them off in every direction.

The ride through the narrow streets was most dangerous, little boys of seven or eight letting off rifles about two feet from one. We eventually settled down near the aerodrome, which is now a complete wreck, 30 machines having been burnt. We get lots of wood, and have a large bonfire and sing-song, and get more or less dry before going to bed.

Monday, October 7.—Had a day of rest and gave the horses some good grazing. One Taube came over us. Brig-Gen. G. A. Weir turns up to take command of the brigade. He is an old Harrow man (was there with me) and reported to be a good General and great thruster.

Tuesday, October 8.—During breakfast over comes a Taube, this time with bombs, of which we get three. One signaller, Pte. Kendall, was blown to pieces, and I had two horses killed and one wounded. We were lucky to get off so cheap.

Charles Turner and I are invited with 18 other officers to a feast given by the local pasha in a village called Bethnail. We rode to the outskirts of the village, where we were met by the pasha's son, who gave us an exhibition of horsemanship on a beautiful Arab mare. Also a most brilliantly-dressed Arab arrived, who spoke English very well, having been for some time in America. On arrival of the G.O.C. in his car this man jumped in and led the way, firing off his rifle all the time. Outside the village we were met by the inhabitants who each let off about 30 rounds—more or less—into the air. We eventually brought up at the pasha's house, small but comfortable, in a secluded ravine. Here we had coffee and cigarettes and sat down to a good feast of seven courses. Excellent bread, wine, grapes, and some very good dishes of meats and vegetables. We all ate until we were nearly bursting, not having had such a good feed since September 20. Afterwards our servants were entertained until they also nearly burst, and then we rode off amongst more fusillades and *feux de joie*.

At Tel-esh-Sherif there was another banquet in honour of our troops on October 9. This was attended by the C.O. and Major Turner.

On October 9, pursuant to the plan of the High Command, the regiment had orders to move forward to Homs. The Desert Mounted Corps had now one division (the Australian) at Damascus, where it was left to deal with

BAALBEK



prisoners, etc. It was much weakened by malaria. The 4th Division, like the Australian Division, was suffering very much from malaria, and was ordered to remain at Zahle. The 5th Division alone was to move to Homs, which was said to be occupied by a force of about 2,000 Turks. The R.G.H. marching out strength on October 9 was 18 officers, 266 O.R.'s, and 288 animals. Twelve Arabs were attached. The regiment only moved as far as Tel-esh-Sherif, a distance of about eight miles north, and rested there during October 10. On this date it was decided that the 4th Cavalry Division was too weak to move and the 5th Division was to push on to Aleppo via Baalbek, and be followed later by the Australian Division when it was fit to march.

On October 11 the regiment was paraded as leading regiment of the 13th Brigade for the march on Baalbek, about 15 miles north. Here the British troops had a great reception, and the inhabitants raised triumphal arches in their honour. The town was found to be very little damaged, and there were good opportunities for shopping. All ranks also enjoyed the opportunity of visiting the famous ruins of Baalbek.

Baalbek (the Greek Heliopolis and the Scriptural Baalath) is one of the most ancient cities of the world, and the ruins of the Temple of Jupiter are comparable with the ruins of the Acropolis of Athens. Some portions of the ancient wall of the city are still standing and are probably of Phœnician origin. Since Baalbek was on the caravan road between Tyre and Palmyra it was probably a great city in the most remote times. It was one of the chief cities of the Empire of Alexander the Great, and in the time of the first Roman Emperor was dignified with the rank of a Roman colony. The Great Temple was erected by Antoninus Pius, and Theodosius converted this into a Christian church. Baalbek fell to the Arabs in the first century, and in the thirteenth century it was captured by the Mongol Golden Horde. The great Mongol leader Tamerlane converted the Great

Temple into a fortress. The city was frequently mentioned in the Crusades.

The regiment remained at Baalbek during October 12. On October 11 the following immediate rewards were published from the 13th Cavalry Brigade by wire: Six Military Medals for acts of gallantry since September 19-20: Sergt. Radcliffe, Corpl. Tuffnell, Sergt. Morrell, Lce.-Corpl. Cashmore, Lce.-Sergt. Periam, and A/Corpl. Hambling. These N.C.O.'s were paraded at the orderly room and congratulated by the C.O.

During this day 2nd Lieut. T. K. Greene was evacuated to field ambulance with fever. 2nd Lieut. Gaydon and two troops of "A" Squadron were detailed to round up prisoners in the town and to stop looting by Arabs.

On October 12 the regiment provided fatigue parties to organise the prisoners of war into working parties to clean up the town, and other fatigue parties were detailed to collect grain, etc., for the horses. On October 13 the regiment paraded ready to march to Lebwe, about 18 miles distant. The parade strength was 18 officers, 206 O.R.'s, and 300 animals. Fourteen Arabs were attached. "D" Squadron, under Major Howard, acted as advance guard to the brigade. The going was very bad, the country being rough and stony. Lebwe was reached in the afternoon, and our troops had again a friendly reception there. Four officers of the regiment dined with the local chief, who reported that the villagers had killed 120 of the retreating Turks and Germans and many of their horses. There was ample evidence, visual and olfactory, of this statement. The night passed quietly.

On October 14 the brigade moved on to El Kaa, a distance of 16 miles, and here again the men were cheered by the arrival of a mail from England. On October 15 Kussier was reached after a dusty march of 18 miles. The strenuous marching was having its effect on the regiment, and men were evacuated daily to the Field Ambulance. On October 16 the regiment, being leading regiment for the brigade, reached Homs, and had a great

reception from the inhabitants, who turned out in thousands to welcome the British troops. Five officers were invited to a banquet by the Mayor of the town.

At Homs the regiment remained for four days, camping on the banks of the Orontes, owing to the bridge over the river having been destroyed. There was good grazing for the horses, and the men were able to bathe. The rest and the grazing had a very good effect on the animals of the force, and the men also benefited by the fact that their rations could be supplemented by vegetables and fruit. There were, however, many evacuations to the Field Ambulance. On October 20 Major C. E. Turner and no less than 16 O.R.'s had to be evacuated to hospital.

On October 21 the regiment moved to Er. Rastan, where the bridge had been sufficiently repaired for road traffic. Some 40 horses had to be left behind for resting and grazing, and the strength of the regiment in marching out was only about one-third of its strength when the march was begun, being 15 officers, 153 O.R.'s, and 225 animals. On October 22 the regiment left for Hama, arriving there early in the afternoon and bivouacking near the Orontes. The next day the march was resumed for Shakihun. The River Orontes was now left behind, and the regiment marched across the undulating plain. It was generally good going, but the only water available was from the village wells. A dull march on October 24 brought the regiment to Maarit el Naman, where the villagers were found to be hostile. But there were some excellent figs. It was reported that a force of 1,000 Turks were at Hamdama station on our right. An out-post group was posted to watch them. From this point armoured cars were sent forward and found some enemy cavalry in front of Aleppo.

It was reported that there were some thousands of the enemy still in Aleppo. Gen. MacAndrew thereupon determined to try to bluff the enemy into surrendering, and, to this end, sent an officer with a flag of truce into

Aleppo to demand the capitulation of the city. The Turks took this officer through their defences without blindfolding him, apparently in order to show him that the position was a strong one (which it was) and adequately held. Having done so, they entertained him courteously with cigarettes, coffee, and small talk for half an hour or so, and then handed him a reply to take back to the British General. The officer got back to divisional headquarters with this letter: "The Commander of the Turkish garrison of Aleppo does not find it necessary to answer your note." The Turkish Commander, however, after making this bold reply, began to get uneasy, and during the night of October 25 withdrew his forces to the north.

On the evening of October 24 the armoured cars were withdrawn into bivouac on the open plain south of Khan Tuman, so as to give them freedom of movement if attacked during the night.

On October 25, late in the morning, the regiment had orders to move on to Seraikin, a distance of 20 miles, and reached that point just as night fell. The next day the regiment advanced farther to Khan Tuman, a distance of 19 miles, and heard that our troops had already entered Aleppo, which had been evacuated by the Turks.

The capture of Aleppo had been always a darling object of the Supreme War Council, as it was a strategic centre of the Turkish Empire in Asia. In the old days, before the Cape route to India was developed, Aleppo was the chief trading centre on the road to India, and had close connection with Venice in the palmy days of the Adriatic Republic. Aleppo fell into the hands of the Saracens in the seventh century, was sacked by Tamerlane in the fifteenth century, and was occupied by the Ottoman Turks in the sixteenth century, and was then never occupied by a Western European power until the arrival of the 5th Division in 1918.

The British forces found Aleppo very little damaged. The water supply and most of the public buildings were

intact. In the city we captured 821 prisoners, 18 guns, and a large amount of rolling stock. Mr. W. T. Massey in his book *Allenby's Final Triumph* comments on the achievement of the 5th Cavalry Division :

The 5th Cavalry Division had now completed a march that will be numbered as one of the finest in the annals of war. From September 19 to October 26 they had marched and fought over 500 miles of country, and during this period they had captured 52 guns, 6 German officers, 273 German other ranks, 371 Turkish officers, 11,191 Turkish other ranks, and 151 Bedouins. The towns the division occupied included Nazareth, Haifa, Acre, Zahle, Moallaka, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo, and all this had been accomplished at the cost of 39 killed, 160 wounded, and 9 missing—a truly wonderful record. It was a magnificent division, its officers and men endowed with the cavalry spirit, from their gallant and dashing leader downwards. A misfortune befell the division when the triumph was complete. Months after fighting was over Gen. MacAndrew met with an accident in Aleppo and was badly burned. His wounds were serious, but they were yielding to treatment when his heart gave out, and the division mourned for a leader they loved, whilst the British army lost an officer who would have gone far in the Service. He was not well when I saw him in Aleppo after the Armistice, and he was upset by the sickness reports, which showed that his division had not escaped the malaria and influenza which was incapacitating a large proportion of Gen. Allenby's army in the hour of final victory. But Gen. MacAndrew intended to carry on, and his indomitable energy, perseverance, and pluck kept him at his post. His name was carried back to India by the warriors who served in his command, and it will be remembered with the gallant captains who have won martial fame throughout the Indian Empire.

An interesting inscription was cut on the rock cliffs near Beirut (by the side of those of Rameses II., Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, and other early conquerors of Syria). It reads :

“ The British Desert Mounted Corps,
aided by the Arab Forces of King Hussein,
captured Damascus, Homs, and Aleppo,
October, 1918.”

One member of the regiment, recalling the Biblical story of Nebuchadnezzar being turned out to grass,¹ commented that he hoped the grazing was better in those days.

A significant parade was that of October 27, when the regiment entered Aleppo. The following is the roll of officers and men who mobilised with the regiment and who took part in that entry :

Headquarters

Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O.
 235005. R.S.M. Butler, A.
 235062. R.Q.M.S. Belcher, A.
 235069. S.S.M. Garrett, C. F.
 225018. S.S.M. Young, W. J.
 235037. S.Sadd.-Sergt. Honey, A. S.
 235039. Sergt. Parslow, F. T. T.
 235448. Lce.-Corpl. Mallett, R.
 235108. Pte. Williams, H. F.

" A " Squadron

Capt. Lord A. A. Apsley, M.C.
 235054. Sergt. Ratcliffe, W. M.
 235044. Farr.-Sergt. Morgan, F. W.
 235031. A/Sergt. Huxtable, H.
 235202. A/Sergt. Phillips, C.
 235204. Farr.-Corpl. Allen, C.
 235102. Lce.-Corpl. Waters, W. J.
 235149. Pte. Holborow, D.
 235177. Pte. Marsh, H.
 235185. Pte. Taylor, J.

" B " Squadron

235006. S.Q.M.S. Williams, J. E.
 235124. Pte. Forrest, E. G.

" D " Squadron

Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C.

¹Lord Rosebery's sententious epigram will be remembered on the trials of great men in their retirement: 'Napoleon on his rock and Nebuchadnezzar in his meadow.'

- 235140. Farr.-Sergt. Messenger, T.
- 235083. Sergt. Periam, H.
- 235154. Sergt. Stock, W. H.
- 235064. Corpl. White, H. T.
- 235175. Pte. Lewis, M. H.

Transport

- 235077. Corpl. Williams, M. T.
- 235116. Pte. Stayt, C. J.
- 235121. Pte. Andrews, H.
- 235110. Pte. Bennion, L.

The following is the roll of the men who sailed with the regiment from England on April 9th, 1915, and who took part in the entry into Aleppo :

Headquarters

- 235246. F.Q.M.S. Gabb, H.
- 235250. A/Sergt. Walker, G.
- 235381. Lce.-Corpl. Griffiths, A.
- 235227. Pte. Turner, F.
- 235208. Pte. Luker, T.
- 235339. Pte. Hartwell, W.
- 235340. Pte. Langfield, J.
- 235228. Pte. Lord, H.
- 235258. Pte. Hooper, C. J.

" A " Squadron

- 235247. Pte. Bott, G.
- 235364. Pte. Gibb, M. P.

" B " Squadron

- 235354. A/S.S.M. Barton, B. O.
- 235257. A/Sergt. Castle, G.
- 235219. Farr.-Sergt. Withers, R.
- 235220. Lce.-Corpl. Rickards, W.

" D " Squadron

- 235370. Sergt. Breakwell, L. D.
- 235182. Sergt. Insoll, R.
- 235195. Farr.-Corpl. Matthews, T

- 235248. Pte. Alder, S.
- 235226. Pte. Horton, H.
- 235280. Pte. Williams, R. W.
- 235296. Pte. Evans, G.
- 235300. Pte. Nicholls, C.
- 235281. Pte. Pankhurst.
- 235184. Pte. Maunders, H. I.

Transport

- 235221. Lce.-Corpl. Hayden, I. W.
- 235332. Pte. Sprackling, L. I.

On October 27 the regiment moved forward early in the morning by a very rough track, leaving Aleppo on its right, and took post at Bileramun, five miles north of Aleppo and astride the road from that town to Alexandretta. Here the 15th Brigade had had an unsuccessful charge against the Turkish rearguard. The latter had retired 20 miles, and we took over an outpost line to relieve the 15th Brigade, while the 14th Brigade went to seize the railway junction between Baghdad, Constantinople, and Aleppo, to cut off the Turkish force in Mesopotamia.

That was the end of a long trek. Between September 19 and October 26 our division had covered 500 miles, which meant for most of the troops marching 700 miles. The regiment remained in its post of observation until October 31, when hostilities with Turkey ceased.

The following is a copy of the brigade wire received at 11.50 a.m. on October 31 :

G.H.Q. wires 9 a.m. to-day. An armistice has been concluded with Turkey by terms of which hostilities between the Allies and Turkey will cease at 12 a.m. to-day. Posts will remain as at present and under cover. There is no guarantee that the Turks have received this notice. Armoured cars will not proceed out on patrol. Acknowledge.—13TH CAVALRY BRIGADE.

The strength of the regiment on October 31 was 14 officers, 142 O.R.'s, and 214 animals.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN

DURING November the R.G.H. remained in occupation of its outpost line. On November 1 news was received of the surrender of the Tigris Turkish force. On November 3 a thanksgiving service to the Almighty in grateful recognition of the triumph which had been achieved was held at the regimental headquarters. Every available member of the regiment was present.

Capt. E. P. Butler and Capt. R. Barnett rejoined the regiment from hospital and Lieut. A. C. Adams from the Divisional Camel Supply Column, and reinforcements of four officers and 89 O.R.'s arrived. On November 9 Capt. A. A. Lord Apsley was awarded the D.S.O. in the field, and on November 10 the following were awarded the D.C.M. in the field : Sergt. W. G. Castle, Sergt. T. H. Akers, Corpl. H. J. Wiseman, and Pte. E. G. Forrest.

Orders for the day gave as the reasons for these awards :

Captain Allan Algernon Bathurst Lord Apsley, M.C., R.G.H., awarded the D.S.O. on November 9, 1918.

On September 30, 1918, near Damascus, this officer was sent out with a troop of 20 men and a Hotchkiss gun team to seize and prevent the Kadem wireless station from being burnt. On his way he came across a party of Germans, which he at once charged, inflicting loss on the enemy, the remainder surrendering. On nearing Kadem station he found his advanced point held up by the enemy, whose strength was double his own. He made a sweeping movement to the flank and again charged, killing 12 with the sword, the remainder being put to flight. On arrival at the wireless station it was found to have been already burnt and destroyed. The enemy was now strongly reinforced from all sides, which threatened to cut off Lord Apsley's troop, and he ordered a retirement, which was carried out in perfect order.

During the retirement the troop was attacked from the flank and another charge was made, inflicting loss and enabling him to get away intact.

Throughout this mission this officer showed great skill and determination in leadership and disregard of all personal danger.

Captain Lord Apsley, M.C., on September 20 was out with a Hotchkiss gun team to hold a position protecting the right flank at Nazareth. His thorough appreciation of the situation and the valuable information he constantly sent back greatly assisted the G.O.C. in making his disposition.

Sergt. Thomas Henry Akers, R.G.H. Awarded the D.C.M. on November 10, 1918.

This N.C.O. has been in charge of a troop throughout the recent operations. On September 20 in Nazareth he was holding an advanced position in the town where they came under heavy M.G. and rifle fire from among cactus hedges, lanes, and horses.

When the order to retire came he remained himself to the very last with his Hotchkiss team, and by his great coolness and determination withdrew his troop through the streets of Nazareth under very heavy machine gun and rifle fire with but few casualties. This N.C.O. has continually shown the greatest coolness and courage in action, thereby gaining the complete confidence of his men.

Corpl. Harold John Wiseman, R.G.H., awarded the D.C.M. on November 10, 1918.

On September 19, 1918, at about three miles north-east of Nahr-el-Falik, this N.C.O. was ordered to proceed with his patrol to locate guns that were firing on the brigade from the right flank.

Having located the guns, and seeing they were about to limber up, he at once charged with his patrol and captured them, with their teams and personnel complete. This was a most dashing affair, and showed great initiative on the part of this N.C.O.

Private Edward George Forrest, R.G.H., awarded the D.C.M. on November 10, 1918.

This O.R. when on patrol on September 19, 1918, noticed a column of waggons moving north from Nahr-el-Falik. He at once galloped at the column with drawn sword and captured the entire column, consisting of 36 waggons, 4 officers, and 100 men. Pte.

Forrest, acting on his own initiative, showed great pluck in charging single handed what turned out to be an ammunition column.

Sergt. William George Castle, R.G.H., awarded the D.C.M. on November 10, 1918.

At Nazareth on September 20, 1918, this N.C.O. was sent out with a patrol from the advanced guard while the regiment was approaching the town, with orders to reconnoitre a hill on the right flank which was observed to be held by the enemy. He worked his way up unobserved and got within 50 yds. of an enemy M.G., which was entrenched commanding the road along which the regiment had to pass. Displaying great initiative and courage, he at once drew swords and galloped the position, capturing the gun and one German officer and five O.R.'s.

This action undoubtedly saved the head of the regiment from having severe casualties inflicted upon it and facilitated the entry into Nazareth.

On another occasion this N.C.O. showed great dash in rounding up motor-lorries full of escaping Germans.

It will be convenient at this stage to give a record of the commissions granted to men of the R.G.H. during the campaign. It is truly a splendid record, and evidence of the high state of efficiency kept up in the regiment that no less than 163 of its members were promoted to commissioned rank.

COMMISSIONS GRANTED TO MEN OF R.G.H.

Rank	Name	Date of Discharge	Unit in which Commissioned
R.S.M.	Turk, G. S.	7/10/15	A.O.D.
R.Q.M.S.	Shenton, S.	16/10/16	A.O.D.
Lce.-Sergt.	Kenward, F. R.	20/4/15	10th S.W.B.
Sergt.	Ormandy, H.	9/2/15	R.E.
S.S.M.	De Rees, J. C. C.	10/6/15	1/4th Welsh.
Sergt.	Givons, A. D.	21/2/15	10th S.W.B.
F.Q.M.S.	Parnell, W. E.	14/2/17	A.S.C.
Sergt.	Brewer, E.	18/12/16	3/1st Glam. Yeo.
Corpl.	Huggett, W.	12/9/15	4th S.W.B.
Sergt.	Sharp, J.	20/12/16	8th Irish Horse.
S.S.M.	Bracher, W. S.	1/12/14	3rd S.M.F.A.
Lce.-Sergt.	Chapman, F.	10/1/16	14th Glosters.
S.S.M.	Everard, C. E.	12/9/15	9th Notts & D.

Rank	Name	Date of Discharge	Unit in which Commissioned
Sergt.	Langford, T. P.	25/9/16	3/1st Suffolk Yeo.
Sergt.	Logan, H. B.	24/11/14	1st S.M.B., R.F.A.
Sergt.	Thomas, L. J.	20/1/15	6th Glosters.
S.S.M.	Gorman, J.	18/11/14	1st Welsh F.A.
Sergt.	Davis, H. C. E.	20/10/16	1st Res. Bn. Mon.
Corpl.	Taylor, W. K. W.	4/12/15	3/7th R.W.R.
Sergt.	Philip, H. J. S.	25/9/16	4th Glosters.
Corpl.	Hull, R. J.	23/12/15	13th W. Yorks.
S.S.M.	Clarke, H.	24/1/17	3rd Wilts.
Sergt.	Fussell, H. W.	12/9/15	7th Glosters.
Sergt.	Robertson, G. A.	25/9/16	4th Manchesters.
Sergt.	Dixon, F.	26/8/15	13th Glosters.
Pte.	Lavington, H. C.	2/3/15	7th S.L.I.
Sergt.	Bird, J. O.	18/2/15	2/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Drake, P. A.	15/11/15	11th Glosters.
Pte.	Clifton, H. J.	24/10/16	4th Glosters.
Lce.-Corpl.	Harris, E.	24/1/16	4th Glosters.
Lce.-Sergt.	Trenfield, R. B.	24/5/15	A.S.C.
Sergt.	Bowden, H.	26/10/15	Welsh, R.F.A.
Lce.-Corpl.	Perkins, M. G.	2/9/14	2nd Mon.
Pte.	Fish, A. C.	4/8/14	1st S.M.B., R.F.A.
S.Q.M.S.	Woodcock, W. G. A.	26/11/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Cornock, W. B.	12/9/16	3rd Glosters.
Pte.	Berger-Wheeler, F. E. A.	6/4/15	8th Glosters.
Pte.	Creese, P. H.	20/12/16	5th R.R.C.
R.Q.M.S.	Wilshire, H. J.	12/9/16	2/1st R.G.H.
Lce.-Corpl.	Parker, W. W.	24/10/16	M.G.C.
Pte.	Pickering, J. H.	4/1/16	15th Glosters.
Pte.	Edwards, G. A.	10/1/16	3/4th Glosters.
Pte.	Ford, H. E. R.	2/11/15	11th Glosters.
Pte.	Harding, H. L.	16/10/16	R.G.A.
Pte.	Stallon, R.	26/11/16	4th Glosters.
Pte.	Skinner, A. C.	4/8/16	M.G.C.
Corpl.	Lefaux, H. T.	20/2/17	R.F.A.
Lce.-Corpl.	Laing, D. A.	8/12/16	S.M., R.F.A.
Pte.	Ruddock, R. B.	22/11/16	4th N.F.
Pte.	Young, S. W.	4/5/15	3rd Dorsets.
Pte.	Clarke, H. R.	21/1/16	A.S.C.
Pte.	Davis, H. S.	23/3/15	M.M.G.C.
Pte.	Rees, W. M.	10/3/15	9th S.W.B.
Pte.	Arney, F. S.	12/1/17	3/1st S.M., R.F.A.

Rank	Name	Date of Discharge	Unit in which Commissioned
Pte.	Goodchap, A. F.	3/12/15	11th Glosters.
Pte.	Lewis, W. O.	31/3/17	Egyptian Labour Co.
Pte.	Davis, A. G.	24/10/16	4th Glosters.
Pte.	Browning, E. O.	25/3/15	11th Glosters.
Pte.	Bolitho, A. W.	14/7/16	Welsh R.F.A.
Corpl.	Harding, C. L.	12/9/15	9th Notts & D.
Lce.-Corpl.	Price, R. W.	23/3/17	R.F.A.
Pte.	Clements, J. B. V.	11/4/15	38th Divl. Arty.
Pte.	Cole, M. B.	5/8/16	
Pte.	Mearing, G. E.	20/1/16	15th Glosters.
A/Sergt.	Griffiths, W. S.	22/12/15	14th Worcesters.
Pte.	Prosser, C.	17/11/16	M.G.C.
Pte.	Harrold, P. H.	29/1/16	
Corpl.	Angier, E.	29/1/16	
Pte.	Lenard, F. P.	29/12/16	M.G.C.
S.S.M.	Pike, G. P.	9/10/16	R.N.R.
Pte.	Earle, A. J.	16/4/16	A.S.C.
Pte.	Miller, C.	21/3/15	A.S.C.
Pte.	Barnett, S. G.	25/2/16	R.F.A.
Pte.	Hughes, E. A.	5/9/16	9th Cav. Bde., Newbridge.
Corpl.	Hushe, W.	21/11/16	6th Worcesters.
Pte.	Moon, J. P.	9/9/14	Welsh Divl. R.E.
Pte.	Moon, G.	9/9/14	Welsh Divl. R.E.
Pte.	Lord, L. J.	10/1/16	15th Glosters.
Pte.	Parrott, E. H.	24/5/16	9th E. Lancs.
Pte.	Welsby, C. N.	20/7/16	4th Glosters.
Pte.	Webb, C. W. V.	26/3/15	9th K.O.S.L. Infy.
Lce.-Corpl.	Luker, F.	28/1/15	3rd Mon.
Pte.	Taylor, C. H.	25/3/15	10th W. Yorks.
Pte.	Ivens, F. H. H.	20/1/16	15th R. F.
Pte.	Grammer, A. F.	15/8/16	A.O.D.
Corpl.	Godwin, W. B.	4/9/16	7th Mdsex Regt.
Lce.-Corpl.	Darby, H.	15/4/16	M.M.G.C.
Pte.	Byard, A. C.	25/11/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Blofield, F. D.	14/9/14	
Pte.	Anthony, O. G.	13/2/16	1/1st Lincoln Yeo.
Lce.-Sergt.	Askill, A. E.	17/7/15	
Pte.	Kenworthy, J.	16/11/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Harding, W.	16/11/15	3/1st Q.O.W.H.
Pte.	Vines, R. G.	21/12/15	1/1st Pembroke Yeo.

Rank	Name	Date of Discharge	Unit in which Commissioned
Pte.	Newman, B. O.	6/10/14	
Lce.-Corpl.	Cullis, R. G.	12/9/15	1st. Bn. Border Regt.
Pte.	Myres, W. W.	2/11/14	R. Wilts Yeo.
Corpl.	Clifford, H.	21/7/15	10th N. Staffs.
Pte.	Barratt, J. R.	28/12/14	10th Glosters.
Pte.	Harvey, R. F. M.	18/8/16	3/1st Q.O.W.H.
Pte.	Byard, A.	20/1/16	15th Glosters.
S.Q.M.S.	Barnfield, A. S.	28/4/15	3/1st R.G.H
Pte.	Wright, J. H.	15/11/15	
Lce.-Corpl.	Vick, D. W.	18/12/16	3rd Glosters.
A/Lce.-Cpl.	Lodge, W. G.	7/5/17	A.S.C.
Corpl.	Dixon, A. R.	2/4/15	13th E. Yorks.
Pte.	Lalonde, L. V. P.	1/4/15	9th S. L. Infy.
Pte.	Sharpe, T. S.	16/4/15	3rd Glosters.
Sergt.	Wakeham, A. S.	8/1/16	14th Worcesters.
Lce.-Corpl.	Thomas, T.	10/4/17	A.S.C.
Sergt.	Townsend, E. G.	17/12/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Whitmore, J. S.	22/9/14	R.G.A.
Pte.	Probert, F. J.	23/5/16	1st S.M.M. Bde. (Signal Troop).
Lce.-Corpl.	Bellamy, J. J.	17/5/15	R.F.A.
Pte.	Purcell, J. M.	5/5/15	4th Manchesters.
Pte.	Hutt, E. S.	19/4/15	3rd Glosters.
Pte.	Blowen, F. E. V.	7/10/14	S.W.B.
Pte.	Collins, F. B.	22/1/17	3/1st S.M.B., R.F.A.
A/Lce.-Sgt.	King, J. A.	4/1/17	A.S.C.
Lce.-Sergt.	Scammell, T.	29/9/15	R.E.
Pte.	Billett, H. C.	24/10/16	3rd S. Staffs.
Corpl.	Llewellyn, J. H.	28/1/15	9th K.O.S.L. Infy.
Pte.	Hay, C. F.	31/12/15	7th O. & B.L.I.
Pte.	Davis, E.	16/12/15	3/4th Glosters.
Lce.-Corpl.	Cottrill, H. M.	18/1/15	9th S.L.I.
Lce.-Corpl.	Whatley, N. S.	4/8/16	3/1st Suffolk Yeo.
Sergt.	Taylor, H. I.	17/1/17	A.S.C.
A/S.S.M.	Woodland, T. H.	30/11/15	S.M.D., R.E.
Lce.-Corpl.	Healey, A. R. C.	5/12/15	14th Worcesters.
Pte.	Boroughs, F. R.	25/8/15	9th D.C.L.I.
Pte.	Garrett, J. C.	16/3/15	2/6th W. Yorks.
Pte.	Davis, C. V.	22/11/16	63rd R.N.D. Res.
Pte.	Fletcher, J. W.	14/11/15	3/1st S.M.D. Cycl.

Rank	Name	Date of Discharge	Unit in which Commissioned
Corpl.	Wilkins, L. L.	2/11/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Lce.-Sergt.	Morgan, P. H.	30/11/15	3/1st R.G.H.
O.R. Sergt.	Hine, W. H.	4/4/16	A.S.C.
Pte.	Hains, W. T.	7/4/15	11th S.W.B.
Pte.	Phillips, A. C.	19/4/15	5th W. Yorks.
Lce.-Corpl.	Bowen, R.	17/6/15	3/5th Glosters.
Lce.-Corpl.	Unwin, W. N.	5/2/15	1st S.M.B., R.F.A.
Pte.	Vann, A. J.	22/12/14	Bde. Musketry Officer (New Armies).
Pte.	Brown, E. I.	9/3/15	11th Glosters.
Sergt.	Malcolm, G. C.	26/3/17	K.O.Y.L.I.
Pte.	Foot, H. J.	3/3/15	4th Welsh Regt.
Pte.	Cook, E. H.	31/10/15	3/1st R.G.H.
Lce.-Corpl.	Jenkins, W. P.	4/10/15	2/3rd Monmouth.
Pte.	Morgan, D.	3/12/15	R.E.
Pte.	Jones, M. H.	9/3/17	R.E.
Sergt.	Birt, H. H.	18/12/15	2/1st R.G.H.
Pte.	Hopkins, E. L.	4/12/15	3/5th Glosters.
Lce.-Corpl.	Daniell, C. I.	8/1/16	14th Worcesters.
Pte.	Goold, W. H.	5/12/15	14th Worcesters.
Sergt.	Bishop, E. G.	6/10/15	11th Glosters.
Pte.	Barrick, G. O. J.	12/8/16	3/4 W. Rid. Bde. R.F.A.
Pte.	Painter, H. S.	8/1/16	16th Glosters.
Pte.	Jones, F. R.	1/4/17	R.F.A. (T.F.)
Pte.	Wellington, G. T.	20/12/16	9th R. R. Cav.
R.Q.M.S.	Brain, F. C.	11/9/16	1/1st R.G.H.
Sergt.	Bick, G. F.	19/5/17	R.F.A.
C.Q.M.S.	Hayward, C. N.	9/6/17	R.F.A.
Corpl.	Worlock, A. J.	9/6/17	R.F.A.
Sergt.	Arnison, C. H.	26/5/17	R.F.C.
Pte.	Bryan, C. J.	22/6/17	R.F.A.

During November the cold and rainy weather was a severe trial, but conditions were made a little more comfortable by the issue of mattresses, and on November 16 winter clothing was issued, a great relief to the men who had been living in a winter climate with summer drill clothing and no greatcoats.

On November 17 the regiment left its bivouac at Bileramun and marched to a bivouac site outside the

Turkish barracks north of Aleppo, on the Alexandretta road. The barracks could not be occupied on account of their verminous condition, but in a day or two they were cleaned up and could be partially occupied. On November 19 the regiment gave a hearty welcome to nine of its members who had been captured in Qatia in 1915 and now arrived as released prisoners of war from Turkey. These men were entertained at dinner on November 21. It has to be said to the credit of the Turkish army that these men rejoined their regiment in good condition and apparently had not suffered any severe hardships.

The regiment, having been relieved of its outpost duties by the 18th Bengal Lancers, was now able to enjoy more leisure, and sports were held on November 24, and on November 25 there was a football match between the R.G.H. and the 15th Cavalry Headquarters, the regiment winning. Sight-seeing parties under an officer were allowed to Aleppo daily.

At the end of November the strength of the regiment was 19 officers, 227 O.R.'s, and 314 animals. It had been added to by the return of various detached units, such as " B " Echelon Transport.

December repeated the routine of November. A recreation room for the men was opened on December 1 in the Turkish barracks. On December 4 Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., went to Katina to take over surrendered Turkish guns and machine guns ; and Capt. E. P. Butler went to the same centre to report on its facilities for a cavalry camp ; and a small party under Lieut. Moore left later to bring back refugees.

On December 10 our victorious General arrived in Aleppo, and a guard of honour composed of picked men of the unit, under Lieut. E. Gilholme, was posted at the railway station. A guard of honour was again provided the next day, when Gen. Allenby made his official entry into Aleppo. On December 17 a thanksgiving service was held to celebrate the final acceptance of the Armistice conditions by Germany.

The regiment was suffering now from the wet and cold weather and from a shortage of supplies due to the impassable state of the roads, but a cheerful circumstance was that the leave roster was opened, and on December 19 a first leave party consisting of Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., three officers, and 14 O.R.'s went for eight days' rest in Egypt. On December 20 the 5th Cavalry Division held a race meeting, but it was spoilt by the wet and cold weather. Christmas Day fortunately was fine but cold, and the men enjoyed their Christmas dinner in the recreation room, with the traditional menu of turkey and plum pudding. On Boxing Day the regimental races were held on the recreation ground, and the horses gave further proof of the excellent horse-mastery of the regiment during the late trying operations by showing what is known in military parlance as "a certain liveliness."

All the men's thoughts were naturally turned towards home at this stage, and what seemed to give promise of a quick release was a lecture by the Adjutant on December 27 on the demobilisation scheme.

New Year's Eve was celebrated by a concert and a dance in the recreation room.

At the close of the year it was decided to place all animals under cover at night owing to the extreme cold. The strength of the regiment now was 12 officers, 206 O.R.'s, and 308 animals.

By the beginning of 1919 it was quite plain that the defeated Turkish troops had no intention of loyally observing the Armistice conditions if they could possibly avoid doing so, and Gen. Allenby had to take stern steps on different occasions to bring some of the Turkish officials to a sense of their position. This fact added something to the troubles of the troops, for it called for a constant state of preparation in case further military action might be necessary.

During January the R.G.H. kept its position on the outpost line between Aleppo and Alexandretta. On

January 4 the Commander-in-Chief (Gen. Allenby) arrived on a visit to Aleppo, and a guard over his residence of one officer and 20 O.R.'s was found by the unit.

During this month the horses of the regiment were stabled in the new Turkish barracks. This was without doubt very grateful to the horses, for the weather throughout the month continued wet and stormy. For the men the month was far from comfortable, as there was a great shortage of man power for attending to the horses and other routine duties owing to the number of men detached for other duties. On January 11, for instance, two officers and 52 O.R.'s were detached in Aleppo.

The issue on January 6 of Christmas plum puddings from England, which had arrived too late for Christmas Day but which were none the less welcome, and a gift of cigarettes on January 8 from the Governor-General of Syria, were the most cheerful incidents of the month, until the glorious date of January 12, when a farewell dinner was given to warrant officers, N.C.O.'s, and men of the regiment who were leaving the next day for England for demobilisation. The first demobilisation party consisted of the Regimental Sergt-Major, the Regimental Quartermaster-Sergt., and 19 O.R.'s.

On January 12 Lieut. and Q.M. F. C. Brain rejoined the regiment from leave in the United Kingdom, and 2nd Lieut. E. P. Cross joined for duty.

On January 19 there was an outbreak of epizootic lymphangitis among the horses of the regiment, due to infection after the horses had been stabled. This was the first epidemic that the regiment's horses had suffered, and it will be recalled that on the first voyage out from England not a single horse was lost, and throughout the terribly trying conditions of the advance on Aleppo the horse wastage was so small as to warrant special approval from the Commander-in-Chief on the horse-mastery of the regiment.

On January 23 "A" Squadron, strength 3 officers, 68 O.R.'s, was ordered to Katma for patrol work. On

January 24 the regiment was saddened by the news of a serious loss to the "B" Battery, H.A.C., who had one man killed and 14 wounded by the explosion of a Turkish shell whilst clearing up the battlefield.

A second party for demobilisation (6 O.R.'s) left on January 27, and the close of the month was marked by the beginning of educational work in the regiment to prepare the men for their return to civil life. On January 31 an issue of leather jerkins was made to the men on account of the extremely cold weather. The strength of the regiment on January 31 was 9 officers, 126 O.R.'s, and 168 animals.

The patrol at Katma had reported daily the situation there "All clear." Capt. Lord Apsley at the end of the month reported on the general position there :

At Katma horses in brick and plaster sheds—good stables, warm, but plenty of air. The men are in tents, squadron office in wooden hut. Two hundred demobilised Turks and 43 Armenian refugees are in sheds between the station and camp. Have re-allotted billets to them and made them clean the ground. Hope to get rid of majority of Turks and Armenians to-day, but the train service is irregular. I have to feed the Turks and Armenians from store dump. Supplies are working well. We are getting meat, bread, and vegetables from Killis, tibben and barley from supply dump Khan Afrin, requisition own meat and tibben. I supply Khan Afrin with vegetables, bread, and barley. Health of troops good.

At Mejer horses are in stables, but not dry nor good lying. Men in barracks. Clean camp site. Telegraph line frequently broken by camel convoys, otherwise all quiet. Health of men good. Horses improving.

At Khan Afrin horses are in good stables. Men in bivouacs. Ruined Khan affords good defensive position.

At Khan Bairam Lieut. White on my orders left one section (one N.C.O. and six men) to act as relay post in case of a breakdown of telephone and to assist in patrolling wire and neighbourhood. It is a disused khan, and before the arrival of troops was used by bandits, who waylaid several convoys here. Stables good and airy. Men billeted in top storey of khan, which they could defend against any force without guns. Telephone communication to Katma and Khan Afrin. Clear running stream passes close by khan. Good grazing.

During February the R.G.H. remained at their post, and the usual routine was followed with intensive effort under the army educational scheme. The syllabus now covered included veterinary science, French, book-keeping, shorthand, and other subjects likely to be useful to the men on their return to civil life. On February 1 six O.R.'s were sent away for demobilisation, and on February 4 1915 Star ribbons were distributed.

On February 10 the regiment moved northward towards Killis. The marching out strength was 8 officers, 102 O.R.'s, and 162 animals. The regiment bivouacked at Khaian for the night of the 10th, and moved on the 11th to Mejer and on the 12th to Azaz. Heavy rain on the 10th and 11th made this march something of a hardship. The regiment reached Killis on the 13th in the afternoon, but was unable to occupy the billets allotted owing to their unsanitary condition. A camp was pitched on some waste ground east of the town whilst the billets were cleaned up. Defence precautions had to be taken at Killis owing to the fact that large numbers of demobilised Turks who still had their weapons were in the town. Patrols were sent out to the villages of Sana, Adhponan, Shimnhrin, Oilum, Adjér, and Mejer. On February 19 a draft of 65 O.R.'s arrived, and the next day "A" "B," and "D" Squadrons moved into the Turkish barracks, which had been cleaned up and whitewashed. Subsequently the Turkish school premises and a mosque were availed of for billets. Between the 25th and the end of the month no less than 72 O.R.'s were despatched home for demobilisation.

The strength of the regiment at Killis on February 28 was 18 officers, 267 O.R.'s, and 282 animals.

At the beginning of March there were reports of unrest among the Turkish inhabitants of Killis and all precautionary measures were taken. Because of this, probably, no serious trouble developed, and the patrols to Shimmarin, Uxun, Tashtali, Niara-Yeb-Yelbaba, Bulbul, and Arabeuren reported all quiet.

On March 14 one troop, strength one officer, 19 O.R.'s, went as escort to " B " Battery, H.A.C., to Kalajik. On March 16 the Corps Commander, Gen. Sir H. Chauvel, visited the regiment to say good-bye, and on this day another draft of one officer and 25 O.R.'s went home for demobilisation. The strength of the regiment was now so reduced that three squadrons could not be kept up, and " A " Squadron was divided between " B " and " D " Squadrons. On March 23 the Regimental Cup Tie Final was played, and resulted in a win for " D " Squadron. The cup was presented by Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C.

The weather was now getting warmer with the advent of the spring, and conditions were much more comfortable. The strength of the regiment at the end of this month was 13 officers, 255 O.R.'s, and 266 animals.

During April the regiment remained at Killis. There was a temporary pause in demobilisation on account of the outbreak of trouble in Egypt, but the men were kept fairly cheerful by sports meetings and the educational classes. Regimental races and a troop competition were held on April 2, " D " Squadron winning the troop competition. On April 12 there was a competition with prizes for the best troop horses, and on the 18th a gymkhana race meeting. On April 19 a race meeting was held at Aleppo and on April 26 regimental races at Killis. Several concerts and lectures helped to relieve the tedium of the month, and on April 30 the Turk provided a little excitement by creating a disturbance in the town, which, however, was not serious. The strength of the regiment at the end of the month was 14 officers, 268 O.R.'s, and 262 animals.

During May demobilisation was resumed, and on May 2 65 O.R.'s proceeded to England. On May 3 a divisional horse show was held and the regiment did very well, coming first in heavy-weight charger and light-weight charger, and second in pack horses, N.C.O.'s jumping, G.S. waggon, and G.S. limber. The usual routine and

patrol work had now added to it some instruction in musketry, signalling, and the Hotchkiss gun. The strength of the regiment at the end of May was 15 officers, 208 O.R.'s, and 252 animals.

June found the regiment still at Killis continuing the same routine. At the Aintab races on June 3 the R.G.H. scored one first, one second, and one third. Demobilisation continued, and parties left for home almost every day.

On June 24 the Sherwood Rangers arrived at Killis to take over the R.G.H. position. Four officers and 143 O.R.'s who were not eligible for demobilisation for home at this stage were transferred to the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry, and the cadre of the R.G.H., consisting of eight officers and 19 O.R.'s, started on the track to Aleppo and home.

This, for the R.G.H., may be taken as the closing day of the campaign, though many of its members had still to remain on service in Syria. Of that campaign Gen. Allenby in his final despatch wrote :

Perhaps the most striking feature of the operations has been the variety of the terrain and of the nature of the fighting. There have been periods of desert warfare ; of fighting in difficult hill country, and in open, cultivated plain. There have been periods of trench warfare alternating with periods of rapid movement with no fixed defences. Troops have been exposed to the sand and glare of the desert, to the tropical heat of the Jordan Valley below the level of the sea, and to the bitter storms of the Judæan Hills in winter.

Such conditions have called for great powers of endurance and cheerful adaptability on the part of the troops ; of quick conception of the varying tactical circumstances on the part of all leaders ; and of rapid organisation and improvisation on the part of the staff. These qualities have never been lacking.

Though the percentage of casualties was lower than in the Western theatre, conditions of life were in many ways more onerous. To the majority of men the weariness and discomforts of a prolonged war are worse than its dangers. Owing to shipping difficulties, the number of men who could be granted leave to their homes was very limited, and there were many who for three

and four years had no opportunity of returning home. Owing to difficulties of communication, the provision of materials for the comfort and recreation of the troops could seldom be carried out on the same scale as in the theatres nearer home. The climate was trying, and sometimes extremely unhealthy.

That the health and *morale* of the men was maintained was due to their own inimitable spirit and willingness ; to the constant care and foresight of the medical authorities ; and to the organisations, official and private, which provided, in spite of all difficulties, for the comfort and recreation of the troops.

The experience gained in the varied forms of warfare which have fallen to the lot of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force has proved the soundness of the principles on which our army was trained before the war, and, above all, the value of the cavalry arm to confirm and exploit a success.

To this may be added the comment of "Q. L." in the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* :

It seems most extraordinary that so little notice has been taken of this campaign in Palestine and Syria, a campaign and a victory that are without parallels in military history. Gen. Allenby, with a force of inferior strength, in five weeks had not merely defeated, but absolutely destroyed and annihilated, an army of 100,000 men—no horde of undisciplined savages, but an army well led, well trained, and amply provided with all the munitions of modern warfare. And this he had done entirely by the skilful and daring use of his magnificent cavalry, for after the first shock of battle had opened the way for his horsemen the infantry took but a very small part in the fight.

The result of this great victory was by no means confined to the East ; its earthquake shock was felt throughout the whole theatre of war, and it brought down in utter ruin the entire edifice of the alliance of the Central Powers. The collapse of Turkey was inevitably followed by that of Bulgaria ; the defection of Bulgaria gave the final blow to the already shaken military power of Austria ; and, with the fall of Austria, vanished the last hope of German victory. Gen. Allenby and his horsemen thrust victory into the arms of the Allies, and precipitated the end of the greatest war that the world has ever known.

As regards the men of the R.G.H. they had good reason to be content now that the end had come. They had kept bright the shining tradition of the British army ; had been brave in action, laborious in service, and dutiful

in discipline. Now their homes awaited them in their fair English county, which has some of the ruggedness of the west with the softness of the south. They deserved the welcome which awaited them—with patience and discipline enduring those dull early months of guard on our English soil, which the enemy never dared to tread ; abandoning with obedient cheerfulness their cavalry life to help as infantry in the last vain effort to save the Gallipoli Expedition ; and then as cavalry carrying the banner of Christian civilisation from the Pyramids to Aleppo.

Duty had brought them the reward of a splendid adventure. To what yeoman of Gloucestershire early in 1914, giving up his time to train for the defence of his home, could have come so wild a dream as that Fate destined him to stand guard over Egypt ; to follow in the path of legendary heroes across the Sinai Desert ; to enter Jerusalem as a deliverer ; to camp upon David's battlefield at Bethlehem ; to cross the Jordan ; to drive the enemies of civilisation from out the home village of Jesus of Nazareth ; to be at the taking of Acre, and to stand as a conqueror in Baalbek, where the Phoenicians, Alexander the Great, the Macedonians, the Roman Antonines, the Saracens, the Mongols, the Arabs, and the Turks had passed ; to rest in the groves of Damascus, and to recall the magnificence of the Arabian civilisation which lit up the whole world with a fitful flash of glory ; to march on Aleppo, where the merchants of the Republic of Venice had bargained for the spices and silks of the East ? But all this had come.

True, the adventure had been a hard one—heat of the desert, miasma of the deadly Jordan Valley, cold and wet of the mountains. He had been hungry often, madly thirsting more often, and rarely without the need to pity the humble dumb friends who carried him on his way. But hardship becomes light when duty calls and glory is to be won, and a fuller cup of glory came never to a force in the field.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOME

ON the homeward way Mejer was reached on June 26 and Aleppo on June 27, and camp was pitched there with the 19th Royal Horse Artillery. The next day all Ordnance material was handed into D.A.D.O.S. The strength of the cadre of the regiment at Aleppo on June 30 was 8 officers and 20 O.R.'s.

The cadre remained at Aleppo awaiting orders until July 23, when it received orders to proceed to Port Said. They arrived at Rayak on July 24, at Damascus on July 25, at Haifa on July 26, and at Port Said on July 27. Needless to say, the marching was done by train on this occasion.

On August 2, 1919, the cadre embarked at Port Said on the transport *Caledonia*, A/Lieut.-Col. C. E. Turner, D.S.O., being O.C. troops. The voyage to Marseilles via Malta was uneventful. Marseilles was reached on August 6, and, crossing France by train, the cadre arrived at Boulogne on August 12, and, crossing the Channel on August 14, reached Gloucester on August 15. They had a glowing welcome. All the country was represented in the crowd of citizens at the railway station. It was recognised that the cadre stood for not only their regimental comrades who had been demobilised in detail or who still remained on service, but also those whose bodies lay in the foreign lands to which the call of duty had taken them.

Only a very small number of the men constituting the cadre had been with the force which had embarked for "an unknown destination" on April 8, 1915, for most of

the original members of the regiment had already returned home, and the cadre had been left to reinforcements or second-line ranks, but the popular reception which they received testified to the gratitude and admiration felt for all the gallant work done by the regiment.

The cadre consisted of : Col. C. E. Turner, D.S.O. (Tockington), Capt. E. Lawrence (Norfolk), Lieut. F. C. Brain (Foss Bridge), Lieut. G. D. Townsend (Cirencester), Lieut. G. A. Austell (Cheshire), Lieut. R. J. N. Moore (Dorset), and the following rank and file : Tpr. E. J. Pullen (Bristol), Tpr. G. E. Howell (Bristol), Tpr. C. H. Curtis (Bath), Tpr. F. Dickins (Pushdon, Northants), Tpr. R. W. Farnston (Rugby), Tpr. J. Goss (Redhill, Surrey), Tpr. A. J. Kerwood (Lydney), Sergt. V. W. George (Bristol), Sergt. P. J. Palmer (Gloucester), Tpr. F. Wellington (Gloucester), Tpr. W. G. Vren (Liverpool), Sig. A. E. Moore (Bristol), Tpr. S. A. Coggins (London), Tpr. H. N. Petty (Bristol), Corpl. H. Sibley (Birmingham), Lce.-Corpl. S. Coldrick (Bream), Tpr. W. Aspey (Malvern), Tpr. F. E. Pynnan (Bristol).

They were received at the station by : Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., T.D., Officer Commanding the Regiment, Lieut.-Col. Adderley, Capt. J. Heather, Capt. E. T. Cripps, M.C., Col. H. C. Elwes, D.S.O., M.V.O., Capt. Mitchell, M.C., Capt. Vaughan-Hughes, Officer Commanding Troops (Gloucester), Major T. J. Longworth, Major Doveton (Adj., Glos. Volunteer Regiment), Capt. Frank Colchester-Wemyss (County High Sheriff), Col. Sir Arthur Anstice, K.C.B., Major R. A. Scott, Mr. Granville E. Lloyd-Baker, Major A. E. Gibbs, Bishop Frodsham, the Mayor of Gloucester (Sir James Bruton, M.P.) and Major J. D. Birchall, M.P. (both of whom came to Gloucester from London by the same train as the cadre), Aldermen Langley-Smith, H. R. J. Braine, J. Clarke, J. Ward, O. G. Estcourt, J. Fielding, and Talbot, Councillors Roberts, Hole, Cox, Alex. Vick, Colwell, Bell Barnes, Gardner, Smith, Madge, Edwards, Mr. A. B. Clutterbuck (City Accountant), Major E. W. A. Carter

(City Surveyor), and others resident in the county, including several ladies.

A regimental welcome was given at the station by Col. Palmer, who first read a letter from the Duke of Beaufort stating his regret that the results of a recent accident prevented him from being present, and telling of his great pride at the splendid work of the regiment and the manner in which they had maintained its record. Continuing, Col. Palmer said it was a pleasant duty to welcome the officers and the men of the regiment back to England after their long sojourn in foreign lands. He welcomed them on behalf of all the members of the regiment and of all who had taken such a keen interest in their regiment. The long-looked-for day of their return had come, and the days were before them when they might meet together and talk over all that had taken place since the regiment left England in April, 1915, on active service. It had been his good fortune to look after their interest in time of war, and now it was his privilege to welcome them home in times of peace. He trusted they would always be ready to answer their country's call in the future as they had done in the past. They could look back with pride on their splendid devotion to duty, which had helped in no small degree to bring about the crowning victory which enabled them to look forward to the blessings of peace.

Col. Turner replied for the cadre, and said that the officers and men were grateful for the welcome home which had been given them and for the kind message sent by the Duke of Beaufort. He wished to thank Col. Palmer, not only on behalf of the men of the cadre, but also on behalf of all those who had left the regiment for demobilisation, and the 1916 men who were still serving in Palestine. It had been hoped that the men would return as a regiment, but that would have been hard lines upon men who had the opportunity of getting away some time ago. He was glad, however, to see a large number of officers and men of the regiment present to join in the welcome.

The cadre then marched to the station approach, the regimental band playing amid cheers from the assembly.

Here the Mayor, on behalf of the city, and Capt. Colchester-Wemyss, on behalf of the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, welcomed the men back to Gloucestershire, expressing pleasure at their return and pride at the splendid work accomplished by the regiment.

Col. Turner thanked the Mayor and Capt. Wemyss, and said that the fine *esprit de corps* of the regiment had enabled them to do a great many things which would otherwise have been impossible. Their principal achievements included being the first regiment to cross the Suez Canal in the advance upon Palestine, and the fact that their regiment at the time the cadre left had penetrated further than any other British regiment into Turkish territory. He trusted that when the regiment was re-formed the younger generation would uphold the honour gained by the men who fought so hard in the East.

The procession, headed by the band and composed of some 50 demobilised yeomanry, then marched to the Saracen's Head, where they were entertained to luncheon.

This history of the regiment now draws to its close. In 1920, the war having proved the high military value of the Territorial Force, it was decided by the Army Council to reconstitute the Territorial Force on a footing that would enable it to become a genuine second line to the Regular Army. Therefore it was intended to organise as the Regular Army is organised for the purpose of general and Imperial defence. Under the new regulations men who had served in the mounted branches during the war for six months could be recruited for a period of one or three years, and men not so qualified for a period of four years. Both sections subsequently were to re-engage for one year at a time.

Under these conditions recruiting for the new Territorial Army commenced on February 12, 1920. The following appointments were made: Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., T.D., to command the regiment; Lieut.-Col.

S. W. Adderley, Quarter-Master, and Capt. A. C. Turnor M.C., Royal Horse Guards, Adjutant. The permanent staff then comprised R.S.M. Barber, Royal Horse Guards, and two Squadron Sergeant-Majors.

During the year recruiting meetings were held at several centres in the county, and on June 26 a meeting was held at Newport for members of the Monmouth Squadron, Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., presiding. On July 15 Col. Palmer invited about 400 members and ex-members of the regiment to a luncheon at Fairford Park. On the same day it was unanimously decided that a Regimental Old Comrades' Association should be formed, Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., being appointed Chairman of the Committee.

The following officers were appointed to the R.G.H. on August 24, 1920: Major C. E. Turner, D.S.O., T.D., second in command; Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., Major F. A. Mitchell, M.C., Capt. A. W. Strickland, Capt. Lord Apsley, D.S.O., M.C., Capt. E. T. Cripps, M.C., Capt. F. W. Winterbotham, Lieut. A. E. C. Cornwall.

S.Q.M.S. Edroff, from the 7th Lancers, was appointed to the permanent staff.

Subsequent appointments in October were: Capt. E. P. Butler appointed to regiment, October 7; S.S.M. C. E. Allison, appointed to the permanent staff, October 19; 2nd Lieut. P. S. Lowsley-Williams appointed to regiment, October 21. The strength on this date was 10 officers, 37 other ranks.

Appointments in February, 1921, were: Major Longworth to be Major; Lieut. C. C. H. Hilton-Green, from the Reserve of Officers, to be Lieut.; Capt. R. G. Cullis, late Border regiment, to be Lieut.

In April, 1921, owing to the coal strike, orders were received (from H.Q. S. M. Division) for the permanent staff to report to the Barracks, Gloucester. All arms were collected and placed under guard. Later instructions were received from the War Office that the Government had found it necessary to create a "Special Defence

Corps" for the purpose of maintaining order. All arrangements had been made to hold the annual camp and training at Cheltenham in May this year, but this was now cancelled owing to the unsettled state of the country.

In June, 1921, S.S.M. W. H. Kelly was the first re-enlisted yeoman to re-engage for a period of one year.

On the occasion of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit to Newport in June, 1921, a dismounted party consisting of 2nd Lieut. W. R. Bailey and 34 O.R.'s, under the command of Capt. Lord Apsley, D.S.O., M.C., formed a guard of honour.

In August, 1921, the regiment fired their annual course of musketry. The strength then was 16 officers, 208 other ranks.

On November 25, 1921, by the invitation of Col. A. J. Palmer, a special meeting was called to take place at the Saracen's Head Hotel, Gloucester, to consider the proposals of the Secretary of State for War to convert the regiment into an Armoured Car Company. The meeting was a large one, and was presided over by Lieut. R. G. Cullis, who was supported by Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., Col. Dundas, D.S.O. (War Office), Lieut.-Col. S. W. Adderley, and Capt. A. C. Turnor, M.C. (Adjt.).

Col. Palmer addressed those present on the proposed conversion, stating that he had received instructions from the War Office that the regiment would not be retained as cavalry after March 31, 1922. The Army Council now wished to know if the members of the regiment desired to be converted into R.F.A. or be converted into an Armoured Car Company. The speaker explained that he thought it more advisable that members should choose to be converted into an Armoured Car Company, such would appeal more to a cavalryman than the R.F.A., and the general training, with internal combustion engines, would prove to be most useful to them. The Armoured Car Company was to be part of the Tank Corps, and to consist of H.Q. and four sections, each section to contain



THE R.G.H. WAR MEMORIAL, GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL

four cars, the company to be commanded by a Major, with a Captain as second in Command

This view was accepted, and at the close of the meeting a large majority of those present transferred to the new unit.

On January 3, 1922, S.S.M. Allison and S.Q.M.S. Edroff transferred to the Tank Corps, and in March, 1922, 116 other ranks transferred to the Armoured Car Company. Thus the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry became the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Armoured Car Company.

There is but one more fact to record. On April 29, 1922, the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars War Memorial, erected on College Green, Gloucester, was unveiled by Lieut.-Gen. Sir P. W. Chetwode, Bt., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.

The memorial takes the form of a massive cross, which, with its pedestal, stands 35 ft. high, and has been erected on sloping ground just below the west door of the Cathedral. The fine simplicity of its design is in perfect harmony with the surroundings. Three steps lead to the spacious platform on which stands the monument. The lower portion contains four low-relief panels in bronze representing outstanding episodes in the campaign in which the regiment gained so much distinction. The titles of these panels are: Gallipoli (1915), "Salt Lake to Chocolate Hill" (depicting the scene on August 21, 1915, when the 2nd Mounted Division took part in the second attack on the Turkish lines at Suvla Bay); Sinai (1916), "The Sand of the Desert" (a reproduction from an actual vest-pocket camera snapshot taken as the regiment descended a sand hill returning from a reconnaissance); Palestine (1917), "Crossing the Jordan" (showing an officer leading his men across the River Jordan on a bridge of boats); Syria (1918), "Watering Horses" (showing a typical scene of tired and thirsty horses being watered at a well after a long trek through the waterless plains of the country). Between these are four narrower

panels bearing the names of the fallen (over 200 in number) in bold raised letters. Above is a super base, on one side of which is carved the regimental badge, mounted on a round base, as it will appear on the stones to be erected by the Imperial Graves Commission, on another the regimental badge, on another the list of territories in which the regiment was engaged, and on the fourth the inscription: "In memory of the members of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry who gave up their lives in the Great War, 1914-1918." Surmounting this stands a high cross.

The names of the fallen inscribed on the memorial are as follows:

Lieut. Anderson, R. G.	Major Clifford, H. F.
2nd Lieut. Arney, F. S.	2nd Lieut. Craddock, H. C.
Lce.-Corpl. Alexander, C.	Corpl. Churchill, L. G.
Tpr. Aitken, S. W. J.	" Crook, W. H.
" Anstey, G. B.	Lce.-Corpl. Coates, J.
" Apperley, A. J.	Tpr. Carter, C. E.
Capt. Brewer, E.	" Clarke, A.
" Browning, E. O.	" Clark, R. G.
Lieut. Bayley, R. J.	" Cook, A. D.
2nd Lieut. Bengough, J. C.	" Cox, B.
Corpl. Brain, J. E. B.	" Cox, H. O.
" Bryan, A. E.	" Coxwell-Rogers, R. H.
Lce.-Corpl. Barnett, F. E.	" Crocker, T.
" Barton, W.	" Crockett, W. E.
" Boulton, W. J.	" Crouch, E. W.
S/Smith Ball, F. H.	2nd Lieut. Drake, P. A.
Tpr. Baker, W. M.	Lce.-Corpl. Dawe, R. M.
" Baldwin, P. C.	Tpr. Daniell, A.
" Ball, C. P.	" Davis, A. E.
" Bayliss, K. A.	" Dean, L. C.
" Bennett, H. A.	" Dee, F.
" Berkeley, A. L.	" Downham, P. J.
" Biss, R. F.	" Dudley, F.
" Blake, F. H.	" Dyer, H. A. D.
" Blanche, A. D.	Capt. Elcho, H. F., Lord
" Brouard, E. J.	Lieut. Essex, R. C.
" Burton, W. A.	" Everard, C. C.
" Butler, F. W.	2nd Lieut. Ellis, H. P., M.C.
" Butler, G. H.	Corpl. Edwards, J. V.

- Corpl. Emerson, W. C.**
Tpr. Ellis, E. G.
 „ Embry, A. V.
 „ Evans, W.
Lce.-Corpl. Furzer, W. B.
Tpr. Ford, P. D.
 „ Fowler, O. K.
 „ Freeman, A.
 „ Freeman, C. S.
 „ Frost, E.
 „ Fry, R. F.
Lieut. Godwin, W. B.
2nd Lieut. Gething, H. B.
Corpl. Gasser, F. J.
 „ Green, A. R.
Lce.-Corpl. Gunning, C.
Tpr. Garrett, J.
 „ Gill, F. W.
 „ Gordon, D.
 „ Green, W.
 „ Greenwood, J. L.
 „ Greenwood, W. E.
Major Horlick, G. N.
Capt. Herbert, Hon. E. J. B.
 „ Hill, S. F., M.C.
Lieut. Huggett, W. H.
Sergt. Honey, A. T.
 „ Hugget, I. H.
Lce.-Corpl. Harris, A. J.
 „ Hart, R. B.
 „ Hatch, W. K.
 „ Hulbert, R.
Tpr. Haggett, T. W.
 „ Hands, W. J.
 „ Handy, A. P.
 „ Harvey, J.
 „ Havard, W.
 „ Havens, A.
 „ Hayward, J.
 „ Herbert, L. S.
 „ Higgins, A. C.
 „ Hine, D. G.
 „ Hobbs, N.
 „ Holborow, H. L.
 „ Hook, H. R.
Tpr. Hunt, H. W.
 „ Hunt, T. N.
Corpl. Jefferies, J. W.
Lce.-Corpl. Jones, E. O.
 „ Jones, R. R.
Tpr. James, J.
 „ James, T. W.
 „ Jenner, N. W.
 „ Jennings, W. J.
 „ Johns, E.
 „ Jones, W. L.
 „ Jotcham, C. R.
 „ Kearney, J. J.
 „ Kendall, W.
 „ Kilby, G. S.
 „ King, L. T. F.
Capt. Lloyd-Baker, M. G. Ll.
 „ Llewellyn, J. H.
Lce.-Corpl. Llewelyn, W. J.
 „ Lewis, J. A.
S/Smith Lord, E. D.
Tpr. Lane, J. B.
 „ Lane, V. G.
 „ Langan, L.
 „ Lamb, T. E.
 „ Leadbetter, R.
 „ Leighton, T. F.
 „ Lewis, C. E.
 „ Lewis, F.
 „ Lewis, F. G.
 „ Lucas, P. W.
Corpl. Mayo, C.
 „ Morgan, W. J.
Lce.-Corpl. Morgan, G. E.
 „ Moule, W. R.
Tpr. Mann, W.
 „ Marsh, T.
 „ Mason, L. F.
 „ Mathews, F. W.
 „ Mayo, R. W. E.
 „ McGowen, G.
 „ Miller, H. E.
 „ Mills, C. F.
 „ Mitchell, C. H.
 „ Moore, J.

Tpr. Morgan, F.	Corpl. Souls, F. E. E.
„ Mourbey, A. J.	„ Springfield, T. O
„ Mustoe, G.	„ Stanley, L.
Capt. Newton, W. H.	Tpr. Salisbury, F. E.
Sergt. Nash, W. F.	„ Sheppard, A. E.
Tpr. Neale, F.	„ Simpson, E. H.
„ Newey, A. T.	„ Skinner, H. N.
„ O'Connell, D.	„ Smith, W. J.
„ Oliver, O.	„ Spare, F. J.
„ Osborne, P. C.	„ Spencer, A. G.
2nd Lieut. Penwarden, W. F.	„ St. George, C. E.
„ Phillips, G. W.	„ Summerfield, S. C.
Sq.-Sgt.-Major Price, W. E., M.M.	„ Sutton, G. R. E.
Sergt. Peacey, H. G.	Lieut. Taylor, C. H.
„ Porter, W. H.	Sergt. Thompson, R. G.
Lce.-Corpl. Pulham, E. H.	Tpr. Tagg, W.
Tpr. Panting, J. T.	„ Taysum, H.
„ Pardington, R. W. J.	„ Tooby, W. J.
„ Parsons, A. J.	„ Townsend, D.
„ Parsons, W. F.	„ Trubody, F. H.
„ Payne, C. B.	„ Tuckfield, L. G.
„ Pearce, D. H.	Sergt. Vick, J.
„ Perkins, F. J.	Tpr. Viveash, H.
„ Phelps, H. L.	Sergt. Walker, W. J.
„ Pitman, S.	„ Warner, E. E.
„ Price, O.	Lce.-Sergt. Walker, H. B.
Lieut. & Adjt. Quenington,	Corpl. Warner, H.
„ M. H., Viscount	Lce.-Corpl. Walwin, O. T.
2nd Lieut. Rawlings, C. W. E.	„ Wetherall, H. W.
Sergt. Richings, J.	„ Wilce, S.
„ Roberts, A. F.	„ Williams, E.
Lce.-Corpl. Rowe, A.	„ Wiltshire, S. H., M.M.
„ Ryland, A. C.	S/Smith Wheeler, T. H.
Tpr. Reeves, L. H. F.	Saddlr. Woodington, E. W.
„ Rooks, J. G.	Tpr. Watts, J. C.
„ Rosser, W. E.	„ Ward, C.
2nd Lieut. Smith, W. A.	„ Wintle, R.
Sqdn. Sergt.-Major Smart, T. G.,	„ Wiltshire, A. E.
„ D.C.M.	„ Wollen, P
Sergt. Shute, W. S.	„ Woodcock, G. F. C.
„ Such, A. O.	„ Woodward, H.

The Committee entrusted with the arrangements—of which the President was the Duke of Beaufort, T.D., the Chairman Lieut.-Col. A. J. Palmer, D.S.O., T.D., the

Hon. Treasurer Major A. H. S. Howard, M.C., and the Hon. Secretary Lieut.-Col. S. W. Adderley—had secured all the funds required from relatives of the fallen and members and ex-members of the regiment, and the monument thus became entirely a regimental memorial (no public subscriptions having been solicited).

The unveiling ceremony was preceded by a memorial service in the cathedral, where a large and representative congregation had assembled. Serving members of the R.G.H. Armoured Car Company (the title given to the regiment under the new scheme) and ex-officers and ex-yeomen of the regiment were present, under the command of Major C. E. Turner. The service was of great beauty. A fine rendering was given of an anthem composed by Lieut. Graham Anderson, R.G.H., killed in action December, 1917.

On the conclusion of the service the congregation proceeded to College Green and formed a circle around the memorial, the base of which was covered with the Union Jack. A guard of honour composed of men of the R.G.H. was in the charge of Lieut. Cullis.

When all had assembled, Lieut.-Gen. Sir P. W. Chetwode unveiled the memorial with the words: "In the faith of Jesus Christ I unveil this memorial, to the glory of God and to the sacred memory of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and yeomen of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars who gave their lives for their country in the Great War."

After a moment's pause the General gave an address. He said it was always a great honour to be asked to take part in such a ceremony, and on the present occasion it was a greater honour and pleasure than those were aware who had not served with the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars and did not see them during their four years of gallant services. It was a peculiarly grateful task to him to say something in praise of their county regiment, because they came under his personal command during many months in the war. It gave him great pleasure

to tell how they carried the honour of the county through three campaigns and brought it back without a stain upon it. He had before him the record of the regiment's service. At the outbreak of war it formed the 1st South Midland Brigade, with the Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry. After being engaged in defence work on the East Coast it embarked for Alexandria on April 15, 1915. On August 14 in the same year it sailed for Gallipoli, where it received its baptism of fire. It left the front line in November and returned to Egypt. When it arrived at Suvla it was 390 strong and when it left its number was reduced to 69. After a short period in Egypt it was the first mounted regiment to proceed east of the Canal, and it took part in the operations in the Sinai Peninsula, including Qatia, where a squadron was practically wiped out. It bore an honourable part at Romani, and afterwards joined the Desert Column and assisted in clearing the Sinai Peninsula. After the three battles of Gaza it shared in the advance to Jerusalem. Service in the Jordan Valley followed, and several months of quiet ensued till the regiment joined in Lord Allenby's final advance, when it shared in the capture of Nazareth, Acre, Haifa, Damascus, Beirut, Baalbek, and Aleppo. The memorial showed that 28 officers and 200 of other ranks were killed. Wherever he went, wherever he asked about this regiment, the name given it was good. The affair at Qatia had been much talked about. It was said that the squadron advanced too far and was wiped out. In Egypt, where little fighting took place, the incident aroused a tremendous amount of discussion and a great deal of very wrong criticism. He made it his business to find out just what did happen, and he could assure them there was nothing to be ashamed of, but everything to make them proud of their regiment. In war it was easy to make mistakes, and tremendously difficult to recover from them. The officer in command of the squadron had his orders ; he carried them out in the spirit and in the letter as he received them. He had reason

to hope that help was coming. The morning was foggy, the telephone wires had been cut, and there was no possibility of signalling. It had been said he might have retired. Had he done so it was possible there might have been fewer names on this memorial. It was not because he did not have the deepest sympathy for the relatives of the men whose names were in front of him that he said perhaps he was glad they did not retire. It was not the first time, and it would not be the last time, that an English officer had shown this splendid devotion. It was such acts as this which had made the British soldier such a formidable fighting man through centuries of warfare. Although we might reduce our armies, nothing could rob us of the reputation of never knowing when we were beaten. It was this reputation which made other nations slow to declare war on us, and that reputation was increased by what happened at Qatia, where their young county soldiers shared in a desperate enterprise without tarnishing the reputation of their regiment. He had been a Regular soldier all his life and the Regular soldier was the best of all men to deal with. He had an equal admiration for the Territorial soldier, who could not spare the time to make himself a professional fighter, but who recognised that it was his duty to prepare himself to stand in the breach. If it had not been for the Territorials' great self-sacrifice when the call came in 1914 we should have been in a sorry way. We had come to a time of peace, but no one could say how long it would last. Whether men came forward or not for service in the Territorial armies would depend on public opinion. If they, men and women, said they were proud to see the young fellows wearing the King's uniform, young fellows would come forward, but if they were half-hearted they would not do so. It might not be in their day, but in the day of their children the cry would again be for men, and unless they encouraged the men to prepare they would not be ready. In conclusion, he urged them not to lose what the

men whose names were inscribed on the memorial had given them.

The Bishop of Gloucester then recited the dedicatory prayers, following which a number of wreaths were placed at the foot of the Cross. The singing of hymns, lead by the regimental band, and the sounding from the roof of the nave of the "Last Post" and "Reveillé," followed by the National Anthem, brought to a close a most memorable service, in which sorrow for the dead was blended with pride at the manner of their death.

APPENDIX I

GALLIPOLI ROLL OF HONOUR.

Those of the R.G.H. who gave up their lives for their country at Gallipoli were :

<i>No.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Site of Grave.</i>
	2/Lt.	H. B. Gething	21/8/15	200yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
1144	Sergt.	Honey, A. T.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
1887	L/Cpl.	Barton, W.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2004	Pte.	Carter, C. E.	21/8/15	200yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2234	Pte.	Coxwell-Rogers, R. H.	21/8/15	200yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2585	Pte.	Crocker, E. T.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
1908	Pte.	Fowler, O. K.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2244	Pte.	Jenner, N. W.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2241	Pte.	Kearney, J. J.	21/8/15	300yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2215	Cpl.	Churchill, C. E.	24/8/15	1,500yds. N.W. of Choc. Hill.
2092	L/Cpl.	Rowe, A.	25/8/15	At Sea.
1965	Pte.	Biss, R. F.	28/8/15	150yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
1991	Pte.	Hunt, T. N.	28/8/15	150yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2162	Pte.	Pearce, D. H.	28/8/15	150yds. W. of Choc. Hill.
2346	Pte.	Freeman, C. S.	28/8/15	At Sea.
1584	Pte.	Woodward, H. J.	4/9/15	Welsh C.S. on beach N. of Lala Baba.
1975	Pte.	Dean, L. C.	9/9/15	At Sea.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Site of Grave.</i>
1798	L/Cpl.	Hulbert, R.	10/10/15	The Knoll, Green Hill.
1982	Pte.	Holborow, H. L.	11/10/15	Scottish Horse F.A. Cem'try by 'C' Beach.
1985	Pte.	Taysum, H.	12/10/15	Scottish Horse F.A. Cem'try by 'C' Beach.
1634	L/Sgt.	Walker, H. B.	14/10/15	At Sea.
2381	Pte.	Jennings, W. P.	24/10/15	At Sea.
1800	S.S.	Ball, F. H.	21/8/15	Probable place 1,000yds. E. of Choc. Hill.

WOUNDED

<i>No.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	
	Lt.-Col.	W. H. Playne	21/8/15	Severe
	Capt.	T. J. Longworth	21/8/15	Severe
	Lieut.	A. H. S. Howard	21/8/15	
	2/Lt.	J. T. Colledge	21/8/15	
	(Tem. Capt.)	(Bde. Staff)		
	Capt.	M. G. Lloyd-Baker	15/9/15	Accidental
1465	A/S.S.M.	Langford, T. P.	21/8/15	
1827	Sergt.	Kelly, W. H.	21/8/15	Severe
930	Sergt.	Lewis, H. J.	21/8/15	
1909	Sergt.	Lovell, G. H.	21/8/15	
1235	Sergt.	Roberts, A. F.	21/8/15	
1566	Sergt.	Day, R.	21/8/15	
1626	Sergt.	Smith, F.	21/8/15	
1493	L/Sgt.	Chapman, F.	21/8/15	
2205	Corp.	Merry, H.	21/8/15	
1749	Corp.	Taylor, W. K. W.	21/8/15	
1784	L/Cpl.	Holborow, J. H.	21/8/15	
2139	L/Cpl.	Mew, H. A.	21/8/15	
1836	L/Cpl.	Ritchings, H.	21/8/15	
1723	Tmpr.	Craddock, H. C.	21/8/15	
1944	Pte.	Abbey, F. W.	21/8/15	
1659	Pte.	Bell, H. R.	21/8/15	
1873	Pte.	Belgin, T.	21/8/15	
2415	Pte.	Bennett, L. J.	21/8/15	
1485	Pte.	Bowen, T. O. T.	21/8/15	
2494	Pte.	Breakwell, J. D.	21/8/15	
2046	Pte.	Clarke, H. C.	21/8/15	
1967	Pte.	Clarke, L. E.	21/8/15	

<i>No.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	
2200	Pte.	Chandler, S.	21/8/15	
2233	Pte.	Cullimore, H.	21/8/15	
1997	Pte.	Edwards, W. J.	21/8/15	
2342	Pte.	Gent, G. D.	21/8/15	Severe
2010	Pte.	Harding, H. L.	21/8/15	
2239	Pte.	Harding, S. J.	21/8/15	
2251	Pte.	Hill, W.	21/8/15	
1786	Pte.	Houghton, J. W.	21/8/15	
2250	Pte.	James, R. F.	21/8/15	
2360	Pte.	Kelly, H.	21/8/15	
2406	Pte.	Hay, C. F.	21/8/15	
2111	Pte.	Mearing, G. E.	21/8/15	
2467	Pte.	Morley, A.	21/8/15	
2330	Pte.	Pankhurst, A. W.	21/8/15	
2181	Pte.	Parrott, E. H.	21/8/15	
2007	Pte.	Parsons, H. H.	21/8/15	
2097	Pte.	Pearce, D. C.	21/8/15	
2187	Pte.	Phillips, C.	21/8/15	
1966	Pte.	Shipton, G. R.	21/8/15	
1779	Pte.	Tanner, C. P.	21/8/15	
2149	Pte.	Vines, M. L.	21/8/15	
2245	Pte.	Vines, R. G.	21/8/15	
1744	Cpl.	Peglar, J. H.	22/8/15	
2193	Pte.	White, H.	22/8/15	
2058	Pte.	Cox, S. H.	25/8/15	
2450	Pte.	Walker, E.	25/8/15	
2006	Pte.	Anstey, A. R. W.	28/8/15	
1973	Pte.	Hearle, R. C.	28/8/15	
1790	L/Cpl.	Ireland, H.	28/8/15	
1522	Sergt.	Bridgeman, G. C.	28/8/15	Accidental
51411	S.S.	Organ, W. H. (R.F.A.)	29/8/15	
2264	Pte.	Smith, R. C.	2/9/15	
676	S.S.M.	Butler, A.	3/9/15	
1734	Pte.	King, F. T.	3/9/15	
2243	Pte.	Dickenson, E.	7/9/15	
2416	Cpl.	Emery, P. G.	9/9/15	
1725	Pte.	Morris, W. H.	14/9/15	Severe
1735	Cpl.	Steel, H.	28/9/15	Severe
1998	Pte.	Armer, J. C.	28/9/15	
2171	Pte.	Barnett, F. E.	28/9/15	
2077	Pte.	Jones, F. G.	29/9/15	
1817	L/Cpl.	Row, F. R.	10/10/15	
1770	Pte.	Viveash, H.	14/10/15	

APPENDIX II

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS TO THE
R.G.H. WAR MEMORIAL UNVEILED IN 1922:

Adams, H. Esq.; Adderley, S. W., Lieut.-Col; Akers, H., Esq., D.C.M.; Alder, S., Esq.; Aldwyn St., The Countess; Allen, P., Esq.; Anderson, R., Esq.; Anderson, Mrs.; Anstey, D., Esq.; Anstey, W. T., Esq.; Apsley, Captain Lord A., D.S.O., M.C.; Arkell, H., Esq; Arney, J. H., Esq.

Bailey, J. H., Esq.; Bailey, F. G., Esq.; Baker, H. S., Esq; Barnham, Mrs.; Barton, Mrs.; Barton, J. H. T., Esq.; Barton, C., Esq.; Basham, J., Esq; Bathurst, The Countess; Bayley, J. W., Esq.; Baylis, Mrs.; Beaufort, his Grace the Duke of; Beale, A. M., Esq; Beaumont, H., Esq.; Bell, H. R., Esq.; Bengough, Mrs.; Bengough, N. T., Captain; Bennett, R. A., Esq.; Bill, E. E., Esq.; Birchall, J. D., Major, M.P.; Bird, J. O., Lieut.; Blanche, J. C., Esq.; Blanche, W., Esq.; Boddington, W. F., Esq.; Boon, H. W., Esq.; Bowen, O., Esq.; Bracher, Capt. W. S.; Brewer, Mrs. E.,; Bridgeman, G., Esq.; Bridges, F. W., Esq.; Bromhead, J. H., Esq., D.S.O.; Bryon, E., Esq.; Burrow, F., Esq.; Burroughs, Miss R. K.; Burroughs, J. P., Esq.; Butler, Captain P.; Butler, Major A.; Butler, A., Esq.; " B " Squadron, Sergeants' Mess Fund; " B " Squadron Ball Committee.

Calvert, Col. H. H.; Calvert, H. M., Esq.; Campbell, Captain A.; Cattley, H. G., Esq., D.C.M.; Chandler, G. S., Esq.; Chapman, F., Esq.; Clarke, A., Esq.; Clarke, M. L., Esq.; Clarke, Captain; Clarke, Lieut. H.; Clifford, Mrs. H. F.; Clifford, Mrs. H.; Codrington, Major G.; Colledge, Captain, J. F.; Cook, Mrs.; Comeley, W., Esq.; Cornock, W., Esq.; Cornwall, A. E. C., Esq.; Cornock, Captain W. B.; Cotswold Ball Committee; Cox, R., Esq.; Cripps, Captain E. T., M.C.; Cripps, Major F. W. B., D.S.O.; Cross, J. Esq., M.M.

Darell, Major Sir L. E. H. M., Bart., D.S.O.; Dash, E. T., Esq.; Davis, H., Esq.; Davies, A. T., Esq.; Dawes, F. W., Esq.; Debley, F., Esq.; De Freville, G., Lieut.; Dennis, Captain S.; Downham, Mrs.; Dow, A., Esq.; Dudfield, B., Esq.; Duncan, Captain A. C.; " D " Squadron Dinner.

Eagles, A. E., Esq.; Elwes, H. C., Lieut.-Col., M.V.O., D.S.O.;

Ellis, S. J., Esq. ; Emerson, Mrs. ; Everard, G. W., Esq. ; Eyles, C., Esq. ; Ellis, Mrs. H. A.

Farndon, R. W., Esq. ; Fletcher, Mrs. F. ; Forster, Captain C. M. ; Forster, Lieut.-Col. R. C. ; Fraser, Captain M. H. J. ; Freeman, G., Esq. ; Freeman, E., Esq. ; Furzer, H., Esq.

Gallop, H. J. G., Esq. ; Garrett, F. E., Esq. ; Garrett, C. F., Esq., D.C.M. ; Garrett, Mrs. ; Garrett, A., Esq. ; Gibbs, Major A. E. (the late) ; Glanely, The Lord ; Gloucester, The Lord Bishop of ; Godwin, A. W., Esq. ; Godwin, C. C. Esq. ; Goss, J., Esq. ; Gould, T., Esq. ; Greenwood, G. W., Esq. ; Guise, Sir Anslem, Bart. ; Gulwell, E., Esq.

Hatherall, J., Esq. ; Hawtreay, Captain G. N. (the late) ; Haworth, Mrs. E. F. ; Hawkins, J., Esq. ; Heather, Captain J. ; Henry, Major E. ; Henry, Lieut.-Col. G. ; Henry, Colonel F. ; Herbert, E., Esq. ; Higgins, Mrs. ; Hoddell, P., Esq. ; Hole, Captain ; Honey, A., Esq. ; Hopkins, H. S., Esq. ; Horlick, Sir James (the late) ; Horton, H. C., Esq. ; Howard, Major A. H. S., M.C. ; Hunt, J. S., Esq. ; Hutten, R. C., Esq. ; Hutten, A. T., Esq. ; Hyatt, G., Esq. ; Hyatt, B. T., Esq. ; Hyett, A. T., Esq. ; Hicks-Beach, The Lady Susan ; Hicks-Beach, The Lady Victoria.

Inglis, Lieut. T. H. ; Insoll, R., Esq., M.M.

James, B. L., Esq. ; James, E., Esq. ; James, A. J., Esq. ; Jarret, E. P., Esq. ; Jones, T., Esq.

Kelly, W. H., Esq. ; Kelly, H. G., Esq. ; Kemeys-Tynte, Mrs. ; Kenwood, A. J., Esq. ; Knee, Mrs. ; King, Lieut. J. A.

Lane, J., Esq. ; Later, A., Esq. ; Lambert, W., Esq. ; Lawrance, Captain E. ; Leadbetter, W., Esq. ; Lees, L., Esq. ; Lefeaux, H. T., Esq. ; Lewis, F. H., Esq. ; Lloyd-Baker, G. A., Esq. ; Lloyd-Baker, Miss ; Lloyd-Baker, The Hon. Mrs. M. G. ; Logan, Captain H. ; Longworth, Major T. J. ; Lovell, C. H., Esq. ; Lowe, Captain A.

Mallet, R., Esq. ; Matthew, Mrs. ; Merry, H., Esq. ; McGrigor, Capt. A. ; Messenger, T. H., Esq. ; Meyers, W. W., Esq. ; Meredith, B., Esq. ; Millard, P. E., Esq. ; Mitchell, Major F. A., M.C. ; Minnett, A., Esq. ; Moore, Mrs. M. L. ; Morris, Miss ; Morgan, F. C., Esq. ; Muir, Capt. M. W. (the late) ; Mustoe, C., Esq.

Nichols, D., Esq.

Orchard, W., Esq. ; Ottoway, C. R., Esq.

Palmer, Lieut.-Col. A. J., D.S.O. ; Parker, W. W., Esq. ; Parsons, J. H., Esq. ; Parsons, H., Esq. ; Parslow, F., Esq. ; Patten, A. W., Esq. ; Peacey, F. J., Esq. ; Pearce, R., Esq. ; Pearce, D. C., Esq. ; Pearce, C., Esq. ; Pegg, W. S., Esq. ; Penson, J., Esq. ; Phelps, H. W., Esq. ; Philips, C., Esq. ;

Playne, Mrs. ; Playne, Colonel W. ; Pole, Sir C. P. Van Notton, Bart. ; Ponsonby, Capt. The Hon. H. W. ; Prisoners of War Fund Committee, per Mrs. H. H. Calvert.

Rankin, E. C., Esq. ; Ratcliffe, Mrs. ; Rodway, W. C., Esq. ; Rowley, R., Esq.

Sands, Lieut. M. A. ; Sandeman, Lieut.-Col. R. P. ; Sargent, W. C., Esq. ; Saunders, G., Esq. ; Scott, Major R. A. ; Scott, Capt. C. T. ; Seamwell, Capt. R. E. ; Sebag-Montifiore, Capt. ; Shenton, Lieut. S. ; Shipton, G. R., Esq. ; Shepherd, G., Esq. ; Silvey, G. E., Esq. ; Simonds, Lieut. G. P. ; Simonds, Lieut. V. P. ; Smith, R. C., Esq. ; Smith, A. E., Esq. ; Smith, Wyndham, Esq. ; Smith, Wyndham, Mrs. ; Souls, A. H., Esq. ; Spratt, W., Esq. ; Stackhouse, C., Esq. ; Stayt, C. J., Esq. ; Strickland, Capt. A. W. ; Strickland, Mrs. ; Stratten, H., Esq. ; Steele, Major, D.S.O. ; Stacey, Major C. ; Symes, M., Esq. ; Symes, F., Esq. ; Symes, G., Esq. ; Symes, F. Junr., Esq.

Tanner, P., Esq. ; Taylor, J., Esq. ; Teague, C., Esq., D.C.M. ; Thomas, T. J., Esq. ; Tindal-Porter, Mrs. ; Thorneycroft, G., Esq. ; Thompson, S. J., Esq. ; Tippet, E. J., Esq. ; Toms, J. W. S., Esq. ; Tory, M. N., Esq. ; Trayburn, R., Esq. ; Treowen, The Lord, C.B., C.M.G. ; Tucker, C. H., Esq. ; Turner, Major C. E., D.S.O. ; Turner, Capt. F. ; Turk, Capt. G.

Walker, F. J., Esq. ; Walker, E. W., Esq. ; Walker, W. R., Esq. ; Walters, C. H., Esq. ; Warlock, A. J., Esq. ; Waters, J. R. P., Esq. ; Watts, G. K., Esq. ; Webb, W., Esq. ; White, Lieut. C. N. ; White, W. H., Esq. ; Whitehead, W., Esq. ; White, H. T., Esq. ; White, S., Esq. ; Williams, R. M., Esq. ; Williams, H. F., Esq. ; Williams, E., Esq. ; Williams, J. E., Esq. ; Williams, H., Esq. ; Williamson, C. J. B., Esq. ; Wilkins, Lieut. L. L. ; Wilson, Lieut. R. H., M.C. ; Wintle, H. C., Esq. ; Wykeham-Musgrave, Major A. G., M.C. ; Wykeham-Musgrave, H. W., Lieut.

Yorke, Brig.-Gen. R. M., C.M.G., D.S.O. Yorke, V., Esq. ; Young, V. C., Esq. ; Young, W. J., Esq.

